











THE 'OLD WATER-COLOUR' SOCIETY

VOL. I.



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A HISTORY  
OF THE  
'OLD WATER-COLOUR' SOCIETY

NOW  
The Royal Society of Painters in Water Colours

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF ITS OLDER  
AND OF ALL DECEASED MEMBERS  
AND ASSOCIATES

PRECEDED BY AN  
ACCOUNT OF ENGLISH WATER-COLOUR ART AND ARTISTS IN THE  
EIGHTEENTH CENTURY


BY  
JOHN LEWIS ROGET

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.

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## P R E F A C E

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To form a just estimate of a work of art, some acquaintance with the artist's intention, and the conditions under which his labour has been performed, is generally indispensable. For without an adequate perception of its aim, the critic may be misled, to complain of the absence of qualities which have been purposely suppressed, to give praise to others that are foreign to, and may even detract from, the expression of its leading motive, and to charge the artist with defects which may be inherent in the materials or implements of his art, or due to its prescribed limitations. If this be true of works of the pencil, it is no less so of those of the pen. To avoid such misconceptions, as well as to apportion justly the responsibilities of authorship, the following personal statement is laid before the reader.

The original conception of this work is due to the late JOSEPH JOHN JENKINS, long a Member, and for some time Secretary, of the (now Royal) Society of Painters in Water Colours, who for many years, as time and opportunity served, and as (it must unhappily be added) his own fragile health permitted, was engaged in collecting materials for the compilation of a history which, had it ever been written, might more or less have resembled this. I had had no thought of being connected with such an undertaking until, in the month of October, 1884, I was honoured by a proposal conveyed to me by my friends Mr. (now Sir) Oswald W. Brierly and Mr. Edward A. Goodall, on the joint behalf of the Council of the above-named Society and of Mr. Jenkins himself, that I should make an endeavour to carry into effect the scheme, which his fast-failing strength had

compelled him to relinquish. This, after one short interview with that gentleman, when he instructed me very briefly as to the nature of his projected book, I expressed my willingness to do. It was my only communication with him on the subject, except to acknowledge the receipt by instalments in the course of the next four months of so much of his manuscript notes as he had time and strength to arrange; and he died on the 9th of March, 1885. Some further memoranda, apparently reserved for similar revision, were afterwards obtained from his miscellaneous manuscripts and correspondence.

The papers thus placed in my hands, which had to be dealt with to the best of my unaided judgment, consisted chiefly of notes for separate biographies, mostly of members of the Water-Colour Society, but some of artists who flourished and died before that body came into being; and they also comprised a careful series of extracts from the Society's Minutes, from its foundation in 1804 to the year 1863, with some notes of the circumstances of its actual birth and origin. There was little or nothing in the shape of continuous narrative forming a history either of the Society or of Water-Colour Art; and, moreover, the quantity of biographical information was very unequally apportioned among the names entered on the roll. Of the lives of some, especially those of the earlier artists,<sup>1</sup> there were full and interesting details hitherto unpublished, while in other cases the record was an absolute blank. Unless, therefore, I had been content to treat the matter offered for publication as no more than a collection or commonplace-book of literary and artistic notes, and to issue it in that fragmentary form, there seemed to be no way of utilizing the whole, without entering upon the laborious task of compiling a history of sufficient scope to comprehend it all, together with a necessarily large mass of supplementary matter, which would have to be gathered from other sources. With this task I determined to grapple. I was not prepared, however, to undertake the compilation of a complete or exhaustive history of Water-Colour Art. This was unnecessary for the purpose, and the choice of a more limited scope was, I think, justified by the bulk which these volumes have attained

<sup>1</sup> Notably in those of Cristall, Glover, Nicholson, and Varley.



without such further extension, and by the unexpected length of time which has been required to complete them. In accordance, however, with what appears to have been Mr. Jenkins's first intention, I have not thought it necessary to confine this history either to a bare record of the proceedings of the 'Old Water-Colour Society' with the contents of its exhibitions, and notices of the lives of its members. Taking advantage of its acknowledged representative position, I have considered its annals as forming an integral part of the history of water-colour painting in England, and have endeavoured to define its relations with other co-existent bodies, and with the general world of Art. As, moreover, the parentage and descent, as well as the birth, of the subject are usually recorded in a biographical memoir, so I have included some account not only of the immediate events which led to the founding of the Society of Painters in Water Colours, but of its remoter origin in the practice of water-colour art during the eighteenth century. In this preliminary history of the school, notices will be found of the leading draftsmen of the prior period, and a particular account of the life and times of Turner's early contemporary, Thomas Girtin. The chronicle of the Society is carried down to the present time, and the set of biographical notices is rendered so far complete as to include those of all the deceased, together with such of the living Members and Associates as exhibited works in the Gallery before the death of the President Copley Fielding in 1855. In compiling these numerous biographies, I have endeavoured to render them of service to collectors and students, by affording information respecting the number, subjects, sale prices, and special gatherings of the artists' works, and by furnishing such lists as I could gather of published prints after their designs. These last will also serve to illustrate the intimate connexion which has always existed between our school of draftsmen and the engraver's art. While some attempt has generally been made to estimate the quality of the art of individual painters, as well as to define its scope, I have desired to abstain as much as might be from the intrusion of original criticism, under the belief that a record of received and contemporary opinion would not only be of greater value, but be more appropriate to the impartial



character of a purely historical account. At the same time it is impossible, in treating of a subject such as the present, to divest oneself entirely of the bias of natural tastes and predilections. Besides the facts above referred to, which appertain to the several artists' graphic works, I have readily admitted into the accounts of their lives such incidents of a general nature as appeared to throw light upon character or personal qualities, or to be calculated to impart an individual interest to the several narratives, even at the risk of extending some of them beyond their due proportions. This I have done in the belief that such acquaintance with an artist's personality gives an added interest to the work of his hand ; and, moreover, that in the narrower circle of Art, as in the world at large—

There is a history in all men's lives  
Figuring the nature of the times deceased.

The great extent to which I am indebted, not only to the memoranda of the late Mr. Jenkins, but to other authorities published and unpublished, is, I trust, duly acknowledged throughout the following pages ; but I have also to express my gratitude for much valued and kindly aid received alike from friends and strangers (almost without exception) to whom I have applied for information, both in furnishing facts and in revising some of the biographies.

In order to render the contents of these volumes the more available for easy reference, without unduly incumbering the pages of the Index, I have therein classified to some extent, on a uniform system, under the names of the several artists, the facts referred to in their respective biographies.

JOHN L. ROGET.

5 RANDOLPH CRESCENT, MAIDA HILL, LONDON, W. :  
*March 1891*

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# THE 'OLD WATER-COLOUR' SOCIETY

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## INTRODUCTION

### WATER-COLOUR DRAWING AND PAINTING

The first water-colour exhibition—Nature of modern water-colour art—Transparent pigments—Development of practice—From monochrome to local colour—Influence of national taste.

THE 'Annual Register' for 1805 records the death of Nelson, but makes no mention of the following event, which nevertheless marks an epoch of some note in the national history of the arts of peace. On the 22nd of April in that year, a curious collection of 275 specimens of graphic art was placed on view at 'The Rooms,' No. 20, Lower Brook Street, Bond Street, for one shilling a head, catalogue *gratis*. Whether they were entitled to the name of 'pictures' is a question still unsettled.<sup>1</sup> The exhibitors used that designation, and called themselves a *Society of Painters in Water-Colours*. By reason of its novelty at least, their exhibition, until its close on the 8th of June, was a source of unusual attraction to the fashionable *dilettanti* of that London season. The novelty consisted mainly in the fact of this being the first occasion on which so many works in the above material, from the hands of various artists, had been shown by themselves, without the presence, in the same gallery, of pictures in oil. But the attraction was due in part also to the revelation it made of the strength acquired by an imperfectly recognized school of painting, as well as to the opportunity then given to amateurs and collectors of choosing and acquiring examples of the rising art.

The following modest announcement was printed as a preface to the catalogue :—'The utility of an Exhibition in forwarding the Fine

<sup>1</sup> In sale catalogues of the present day, it is usual to place what are called 'Pictures,' meaning works in oils, in a different category from works in water-colours, these being still called 'Drawings.'

Arts arises, not only from the advantage of public criticisms, but also from the opportunity it gives to the artist of comparing his own works with those of his contemporaries in the same walk. To embrace both these points in their fullest extent is the object of the present Exhibition; which, consisting of Water-Colour Pictures only, must, from that circumstance, give to them a better arrangement, and a fairer ground of appreciation, than when mixed with Pictures in Oil. Should the lovers of the Art, viewing it in this light, favour it with their patronage, it will become an Annual Exhibition of Pictures in Water Colours.' The 'lovers of the Art' responded to this appeal. The exhibition did become annual, and was the virtual commencement of the career of what used to be commonly known as the *Old Water-Colour Society*, but has now assumed, by her Majesty's favour, the full title of THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS.

In order to give an adequate account of the events which led to this experimental opening of a gallery, it is necessary to trace back to a comparatively remote period, the growth in Britain of the truly national art known as 'drawing,' or 'painting,' in water-colours. It is, moreover, a first requisite to the analysis of such a subject, that the inquirer should rightly comprehend the nature of those distinctions between oil and water-colour art, which not only forbade the effective display of works of the two classes in juxtaposition, but divided British painting into two branches, that grew up side by side, each having its separate history, and each its own manner and rate of development.

Between 'oils' and 'water colours,' as means of graphic representation, there are, it must be premised, certain essential distinctions, not directly dependent upon the oleaginous or aqueous character of the fluid wherewith the painter lays on his colour. Pigments, paints, or 'colours' (as they are often loosely called) are either *opaque* or *transparent*; the sensation of colour received from them being produced in different manners in the two cases. When opaque pigment is used, the light by which the sensation of colour is excited is simply reflected from the surface of the paint, and modified or affected by the nature of that surface. When transparent pigment is used, the light first passes through the coat of paint, is then reflected from the surface of the material upon which that coat is spread, and finally passes back, through the paint, a second time to reach the eye. It is

obvious that, in the second case, this light is not only affected by filtration through the paint itself, but also by the nature of the surface at the back upon which the paint is spread. Thus, although in both cases the light really comes at first from the front, transparent colours may be said to derive theirs virtually from the back, and so to possess a sort of luminosity akin to that of a stained glass window. It needs neither artist nor optician to tell us how different must be the effect of the above two kinds of painting. In practice, however, the distinction is a broad one only. There are many degrees of transparency; and light in all cases loses something by reflection. No pigments are absolutely transparent, or absolutely opaque. All have more or less 'body,' as it is technically called; and it is often hard to say whether one or the other kind of colour predominates in a given picture. Layers of paint, one over another, may also vary in their power of transmitting and reflecting light. Thus the two opposite qualities may be intermingled and contrasted with infinite variety. But, if it should happen, as it does happen, that certain effects are best produced by the greatest possible transparency of pigment, it follows that the process which secures this quality is best for such purpose. Herein lies the gist of the matter. Oil, when dry, becomes in some degree opaque. Hence it is impossible to obtain as great transparency with oil-colours as with water-colours; and thus certain powers of imitation are almost denied to the painter in oil which come easily within the range of the painter in water-colour.

In the present day, opaque and transparent pigments are commonly used both with oil and with water. But this was not the case during the last century. The union of both in the same picture was then, in England at least, almost<sup>1</sup> entirely confined to painters in oil. The water medium, on the contrary, was used either with opaque pigments alone, or with transparent pigments alone; not with both together. Thus there have been three technical processes, each of which has had its own objects and proper uses, and to each of which belongs a separate history.

With purely opaque painting in water-colours, as with painting in oil, we have not much to do in these pages. Its practice began in very early times, anterior to the invention of oil painting, and, under various names and forms of tempera, fresco, gouache, body-colour, and

<sup>1</sup> There were exceptions in the practice of miniature painters: see Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 407.



the like, has been employed by artists at home and abroad, with variations of method for its appropriate purposes. A few artists<sup>1</sup> of the last century painted landscapes in distemper; and the same material was, and is, universally employed for the scenery of theatres. Landscape painting in tempera or body-colour was practised as a method distinct from transparent water-colours, until modern times in the present century, when the two kinds of material have frequently been combined in the same drawing. But, before this modern partial introduction of body-colour, tempera painting, pure and simple, had entirely died out.<sup>2</sup> Works of that kind had little or no direct influence upon the rise of the school whose development has here to be recorded. It was in the use of transparent water-colours that it found its strength, and acquired its celebrity.

It is not the writer's intention to investigate by particular examples the history of the changes of practice in the course of which this art was gradually expanded from the use of a single colour, and the mere indication of light and shade, to the employment of a full palette, and an imitation of all the colours of nature. The technical view of the subject has been carefully dealt with by the Messrs. Redgrave in several publications, and to the lucid epitome by the late Samuel Redgrave in the introductory notice to *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Historical Collection of Water-Colour Paintings in the South Kensington Museum* (1877), little has here to be added. Although transparent colours had been sometimes employed in England by painters of miniature portraits, and had even been successfully applied to landscape by Dutch artists in the seventeenth century, it was not until the second half of the eighteenth, and through a quite independent course of practice by our own landscape draftsmen, that the British school of water-colours came into being. Beginning with chiaroscuro drawing in grey or brown, and using the pen as well as the brush, they proceeded to the suggestion of aerial perspective by the union of two simple colours, drawing near objects with the warmer, and reserving the cooler for distant parts of their view. Brown with grey, or either with blue, sufficed for that purpose. Then came the cautious addition of a few transparent tints washed over these grey or brown or bluish shaded drawings, to give some indication of varieties of local colour in objects. Trees were painted green, and the sky blue, and a distinction

<sup>1</sup> Taverner, Paul Sandby, 'Athenian' Stuart, Barret R.A., &c.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 407.



made between tiles and slate, brick houses and those built of stone. More colours were gradually introduced. But the process was still two-fold. A shaded drawing was made in neutral tint with pen and brush or brush alone; and this drawing afterwards stained with varied hues, as a child would colour a print. At length it was perceived that the broken<sup>1</sup> colours, resulting from this grey under-coat's appearing through and modifying the brighter film above, might be got at in a more direct way. The same hues were obtainable by mixture. Moreover, grey itself was the union of all the primary colours.<sup>2</sup> Thus it was found that three well-chosen paints, inclining to blue, to yellow, and to red, were enough, in the hands of a competent artist, not only to suggest the different colours of objects and their forms and shadows, but to diffuse throughout a landscape its proper quality of daylight. The essential elements of the art, in its mature form, were then well-nigh complete. The preparatory drawing in neutral tint was discarded. Local hues of objects, whether in sunshine or shadow, were painted at once as the artist saw them, and then toned down and adjusted with grey and such other colours as the case might require.

To effect particular objects, certain simple methods were about the same time discovered and resorted to, which, without having special reference to variety of hue, greatly increased the vigorous effect of water-colour, and its power to express light by contrast and gradation. Richness and depth were obtained by repeated washes. When some progress had been made with a drawing, and much of the capacity of the paper to reflect light had unavoidably been lost under superincumbent layers of paint, it was found easy again to lay bare its pure white surface; either wholly, in small well-defined portions; or partially, over a wider space. This was effected in the first case by moistening the colour with a hair pencil and removing it entirely with an absorbent rag and bread; and in the second, by washing off a portion of the pigment so as to render more transparent that which remained. Sparkling touches of sunshine

<sup>1</sup> By *broken colours* we understand those colours 'which reach the eye mixed with faint white, that is to say, grey light, but in which the specific character of their hue is still expressed with tolerable decision.' Von Bezold's *The Theory of Color*, Koehler's Translation, Boston, 1876, p. 97.

<sup>2</sup> Strictly speaking, a union of all the *colours*, that is to say, *coloured rays*, in their due proportions, produces white light. But an admixture of two *pigments* has the effect of excluding, or quenching as it were, by the resistance of one or the other, all colour which is not common to the two. Hence the admixture of all the pure or primary pigments, that is to say, those which have no colour in common, produces black or grey.

were produced by the former means ; and, by the latter, tender gradations of light and atmosphere. With devices such as these, the use of opaque colour became altogether unnecessary ; the painter having acquired what proved to be as efficient, and often more ready, as well as more subtle, means of expression. These experiments, with others, more in the nature of tricks of the brush, which were resorted to by particular artists, may be regarded as incidents of practice. But the main step in advance, which effected a kind of revolution in water-colour art, and raised it from mere *drawing* to the dignity of *painting*, was the direct use of local colour, without the customary foundation of grey. The introduction of this method, towards the close of the last century, is generally ascribed to Turner and Girtin ; though it may be doubted whether others were not entitled to some share of the honour. It seems in any case to have marked the period when our artists began to look at the colour of a scene in nature as a thing of beauty to imitate for its own sake.

To art-students of the present day, with the models now before them, and the materials they have at hand, it may appear strange that this process of painting, so obvious to them, so simple, so naturally adapted to the representation of what they see, one in accord moreover with the long-established methods of painters in oil, should yet have remained for so many years undiscovered, should have taken so long a succession of artists to prepare its way, and have only been reserved to men of great original genius to reduce it first into practice. The explanation is to be sought for, not in any want of capacity on the part of these early practitioners, the precursors or founders, whichever we may choose to call them, of our school of water-colours, but in their motives of action. The gradual advance in *technique* which culminated in the days of Turner's maturity will be found to have been regulated, step after step, by the nature of the demands made upon professional talent. Their methods of work, and the materials they used, were enough for the purpose in hand at the time being. As culture advanced and taste improved, other and higher tasks were set before them, and then they employed new methods and needed and obtained better materials. Thus the history of technical progress, fascinating as it may be to the artist and connoisseur, and valuable to the collector as a means of assigning its true period to a work of art, derives a wider interest and a higher value from the indication it affords of the progress of national taste.

## BOOK I

### WATER-COLOUR ART IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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#### CHAPTER I

##### EARLY TOPOGRAPHIC PRINTS

Water-colours developed in application to landscape—First demand for simple topography—Allied more to history than to poetry—Architect draftsmen—Maps and bird's-eye views—Hollar, Loggan, and Burghers—'Britannia Illustrata'—Demand for 'gentlemen's seats'—Conventional perspective—Light-and-shade not used for 'effect'—Buck's views—Low state of art—Boydell—Kirby—Highmore—Scott.

It is chiefly in its application to landscape, as opposed to figure subjects, that we are able to trace the rise and development of water-colour painting. For its course has mainly been governed by the progressive appreciation of landscape painting in Great Britain. A complete account of the varying mental stand-points from which the objects and scenes and natural phenomena that come within the wide category of *Landscape* have from time to time been regarded by the artist's patrons and employers, would show how closely his practice in that branch of art has conformed to their successive valuation of such things and appearances, both as worthy of his representation, and as adapted to their own tastes and requirements. The special course of landscape art which has here to be followed is thus in its earlier stages intimately connected with the then favourite study of British topography.<sup>1</sup> Not only is its germ to be found in illustrations of this kind, but some of the greatest triumphs of its palmy days were achieved in the same service.

<sup>1</sup> The word 'topography' is here used in its ordinary sense of place-drawing, or the description of a particular spot. Ruskin, in *Modern Painters*, iv. 16 (part v. ch. ii.), makes a distinction between 'simple' and 'Turnerian' topography, as being two separate branches of landscape art, the one *historical*, the other *poetical*. Mr. P. G. Hamerton, in his book on *Landscape* (pp. 170-174), seems to apply the term 'topographic drawing' to purely imitative, as compared with suggestive representation, and in such sense to place it in a third category as the *scientific* branch of landscape drawing.



To modern eyes the efforts of our earlier topographers appear crude indeed, if we look upon them in the abstract as works of art. Yet, regarded in the concrete, they have qualities in common with some of the most artistic productions of their successors, and these qualities may entitle them to higher consideration than they sometimes receive. The fact of an old topographic print's being stiff and devoid of the sensuous charm of beauty need not disentitle it to respect as a characteristic embodiment of the important features of the place or object depicted. The producers of such works were content to describe in the simple graphic language of their day the outward appearance, not only of the objects, but of the people among whom they lived, costumed as they really were, and engaged in their ordinary pursuits. Thus setting forth, though in a rude way, 'the very age and body of the time, his form and pressure,' their art, such as it is, preserves for us the evidence of contemporary observers; and, so far, deserves the name of 'historical painting' by a better title than does the fancy picturing of a doubtful event some thousands of years after it may be conjectured to have happened. No doubt there is enough to despise in our ancestors' conception of the picturesque beauties of the land; but we at least learn from these topographers what were regarded in their time as its prominent features. They indicate, even by their omissions, to what kinds of visible objects public interest was then chiefly confined.

It being the topographer's aim to disseminate instruction as well as to please, the designs of many of our earlier draftsmen are known only through prints, for which their sketches or drawings have been but the preliminary stage. Not unfrequently they were their own engravers. A sufficiently succinct view of this period can therefore be obtained from a survey of published engravings.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century the subjects chosen for the exercise of the landscape draftsman's imitative skill seem to have been almost restricted to buildings, singly or in groups. He must already have been employed in the more direct service of architecture; and the technical history of his art might more properly begin with the early training he received when the buildings which he was afterwards called upon to depict existed only in design. The English architects of the Tudor and Jacobean times, and of the Italian Renaissance of the seventeenth century, both drew themselves and must have employed draftsmen to copy fairly their original



designs and lay them down to scale for working purposes. Many of these were probably foreigners. Italians are believed to have been largely employed by Inigo Jones, who also was himself a powerful draftsman. Drawings in Indian ink executed in the early part of the eighteenth century from the designs of *Vanbrugh*, have been preserved, and a great many highly-finished drawings of this kind from designs of *Inigo Jones's* were made by the architect *Henry Flitcroft* for the Earl of Burlington. The latter are in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire. The Earl of Burlington lived from 1695 to 1758, and Flitcroft from 1697 to 1767. Among architectural illustrations of the early part of the eighteenth century, one of the most important is the work entitled *Vitruvius Britannicus*, first published in 1717, from drawings by one *Charles Campbell*. Inigo Jones's designs, collected and reproduced by the architect *Kent*, were published in 1727; and *James Gibbs's Book of Architecture* in 1728. 'Most drawings of this date,' says a professional critic, 'have a grey and monotonous effect, the windows being treated as mere holes in the wall.'<sup>1</sup> It is only in recent times that the architect's draftsman has been called upon to present in a pictorial form—sometimes even to glorify—projected buildings. In the primitive period now referred to he had not advanced beyond façades and elevations in one colour. Perspective, as well as varied colour and general effect, followed after.<sup>2</sup>

And so it was with the topographer. But he, having to deal with the horizontal surface of the earth, laid down his subject first upon the flat, instead of upon a vertical plane. Old charts contain the germ of topographic landscape. They are often not merely ground plans, but are dotted with representations of objects of interest, making no attempt, however, at continuous perspective. From this the transition is not great to the kind of bird's-eye view which we have in *Ralph Agas's* maps, executed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; and the next step brings us to a method of topographic illustration employed at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the curious and interesting plates engraved between the years 1709 and 1763, and collected in four folio volumes under the title *Britannia*

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Maurice B. Adams, A.R.I.B.A., in a paper on *Architectural Illustration*, read before the Architectural Association, 12 Jan. 1877.

<sup>2</sup> The first coloured drawing, of a strictly architectural subject, exhibited at the Royal Academy, is said to have been a view of Seaton Delaval, sent there in 1815 by John Dobson, F.R.I.B.A., hereinafter mentioned as a pupil of John Varley's.

*Illustrata*. Similar plates are contained in county histories published during this period, such as Sir Henry Chauncy's *Herefordshire*, 1700; Sir Robert Atkyns's *Gloucestershire*, 1712; and Dr. Harris's *Kent*, 1719. They represent what satisfied the demand for topographic landscape throughout the reigns of Queen Anne and the first of the Georges.

In the preceding century topographic illustration, chiefly the work of foreigners, had had more relation to pictorial art. *Hollar's* views are at least constructed on the ordinary rules of perspective. His original drawings, however, show less mastery of the brush than his engravings do of the etching-point. Of his architectural delineations the writer<sup>1</sup> above quoted remarks that 'the shading is curiously executed, and at times muddy in effect. The detail scarcely satisfies inspection, the arcades and arches having a thin, weak appearance.'

The buildings of our English universities were depicted by *David Loggan*, a native of Dantzic, in about seventy brilliant prints, in volumes entitled *Oxonia Illustrata*, 1675, and *Cantabrigia Illustrata*, 1688. There are also small views of buildings by *Michael Burghers*, in which a distinctly artistic feeling for composition and effect is apparent. Of these, some of the plates by him in Dr. Plot's *Natural History of Staffordshire*, folio, 1686; White Kennett's *Parochial Antiquities of Ambrosden, &c.*, 4to, 1695; and Hutten and Hearne's *Textus Roffensis*, 8vo, 1720, are worthy of study. The aerial perspective is carefully preserved, the shadows are transparent, and there is about them a pleasant sparkle of sunshine. The figures, moreover, are judiciously placed, and the foliage is handled with more freedom than was usual in the artist's day. Burghers was a Dutchman settled at Oxford, where between 1676 and 1723 he engraved a large number of the headings of the Oxford Almanack. Among the topographic representations in Kennett's 'Antiquities' are also some bird's-eye views, more consistent in their perspective than those in *Britannia Illustrata*.

To return to the last-named work: its first set of fifty-four plates was issued in 1709, and the first of its four volumes was published in imperial folio, in 1714, by 'Joseph Smith at y<sup>e</sup> Pictor Shop y<sup>e</sup> West end of Exeter Change in the Strand.' Its scope is explained in a second title, which runs thus:—'Views of several of the Queen's Palaces as

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Maurice B. Adams, *ubi supra*.

also of the Principal Seats of Nobility and Gentry of Great Britain curiously Engraven on 80 Copper Plates.' These, with scarcely an exception, are inscribed 'L. Knyff Delin. I. Kip Sculp.' Some of them extend across two opposite pages. A very few of the earliest have the names of the subjects in French as well as English. The second volume, dated 1717, contains about sixty more views, nearly all inscribed 'J. Kyp Delin. et Sculp. ;' together with a few architectural elevations of houses on a large scale, and one or two colleges in Oxford, some of which bear the names of other engravers. In the later plates, contained in the third and fourth volumes, we make acquaintance with a draftsman called *Thomas Badeslade*. Redgrave, in his 'Dictionary of the English School,' tells us that this artist practised in London 1720-1750, drew many of the seats of the nobility and gentry, which were engraved by Toms and Harris, and made drawings for Dr. Harris's 'History of Kent,' above mentioned, and some other publications. Before the third volume appeared, the first two were republished (Upcott says in 1724), with the following not very classical announcement:—

'*Note.*—There is a Third Volume in hand, any Gentleman paying Five Guineas towards the Graving, may have their Seat inserted, it being very forward, which is only half what the former paid.'

And the said Jo. Smith of Exeter Change offers the published plates for sale singly, and 'all sorts of Prints and Maps for Halls, Parlors, Stair-cases, &c.'

We have here some indication of the kind of patronage under which native British art was fostered. As the figure painters lived by taking likenesses of the wealthy, so landscape painters found an occupation in portraying their fine houses. We shall see in the sequel how large a part of the work assigned to British artists has been this task of depicting what are called 'gentlemen's seats.' But the mode of treating such subjects was only in the primary stage in the first half of the eighteenth century. The views above referred to are no more amenable to the laws of composition, or even of optics, than their publisher's announcement was to those of grammar. They are framed on a curious union of distinct systems of perspective, having, it may be, three different horizons to one picture. Of the main object, usually a grand Elizabethan or Jacobean mansion standing amidst avenues and gardens laid out in the quaint geometrical style of the time, we



have perhaps a strictly bird's-eye view ; but the winged observer drops to a lower level to survey the distant landscape ; while living objects in the foreground are seen as by a spectator on foot. Thus the bird whose eye the artist borrowed must have been of the breed introduced by Sir Boyle Roche ; for these 'prospects' are taken from at least two places at a time. Indeed, as Cerberus managed to be 'three gentlemen at once,' so Kip's prints are as many views rolled into one. Such conventional combinations were no great novelty after all. They had their precedents in earlier times, and were repeated in those yet to come. Mediæval artists were wont to unite in a single scene events occurring at different moments. As they dealt with time, so too, in an after age, did the great Turner deal with space. He sometimes fetched from their true localities the component parts of his scene, that he might give in one *coup d'œil* the complete description of his subject. And so these early topographers of the eighteenth century, in uniting their three or more schemes of perspective, and giving a peripatetic view of the scene, were merely adopting a different device to accomplish a like end.

Notwithstanding the inconsistency of their arrangement, these representations convey a curious sense of reality. They are carefully, in many cases vigorously, engraved ; and the whole scene being represented in full sunshine, the several objects are made to stand out solidly from the earth ; and a certain unity is effected which prevents an uneducated eye from perceiving the incongruity of the drawing. They are full of matter ; enlivened with countless figures and objects,<sup>1</sup> which, small as they are, tell their historic tale, of the habits and manners of the time. Six-horse coaches with running footmen roll up the stately avenues ; guests at the grand house play bowls on the green sward ; the master mounts his hunter for a run with the hounds ; pasture and arable land are duly distinguished by herds and flocks, and harvest scenes ; deer are in the park ; and heavy wains with long-drawn teams lumber along the high road. Absurd as the drawing is, as a whole, there is in these views a picture more full and comprehensive in its way than many an artistic landscape of modern times. And they probably supplied the demand in the most convenient way. To this day, there are no better prints of the kind 'for Halls, Parlors, Stair-cases, &c.'

<sup>1</sup> The English language wants an equivalent to the German *staffage*, signifying the living incidents of a landscape.



But topographic engravings, such as these, afforded neither scope nor opportunity for artistic treatment, or 'effect.' There is a strong family likeness in Kip's views. Even when the attempt was made to represent a scene as it could appear to the eye, the draftsman does not seem to have thought of rendering it in a subjective manner. A faint dawn of pictorial *chiaroscuro* may sometimes be detected ; but arrangements of light made for the guidance of the eye are nearly always limited to the artificial darkening of the upper and lower edges of the print or drawing, as a sort of border to give relief and confine the attention to the 'prospect' beyond or between these two parallels. Sometimes a shade may be thrown across the middle distance to separate one set of objects from another ; but the main use of shadow in the hands of the purely topographic draftsmen of the old school was to give solidity and distinctness<sup>1</sup> to the specific objects represented. And in the days when 'Boetry and Bainting' were at a discount at Court, Beauty for its own sake is not to be regarded as an aim in this species of art.

The opposite conditions under which the early topographer and the modern painter of landscape pursued their respective callings are well set forth by the Messrs. Redgrave in the following passage :—

'The exact transcript of local objects, places, or antiquities naturally required a clear daylight, unobstructed by clouds or shadows, and free from that mystery of light and shade, so important a feature in art, by which the painter gives variety and contrast, and hides any unimportant or ugly features of the scene. Simple literal truth is all that is required of the topographer. The artist's aim is general truth and the vivid impression of scenery as a whole, and under those varied circumstances which elevate it from the commonplace into the poetical.'<sup>2</sup>

Belonging to the same period, but also continued to a later date than the 'prospects' of Knyff and Badeslade, are the long series of plates bearing dates from 1720 to 1753, by Samuel and Nathaniel Buck, generally known as 'Buck's views.' They may be taken to represent the taste and progress of topographic art in England during much of that period. Samuel, who long survived his brother Nathaniel, was the chief draftsman and engraver of this compre-

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Hamerton's remarks in *The Graphic Arts*, pp. 348, 349, on Albert Dürer's art, which the author describes as explanatory and not pictorial, the outline and shadow being for definition, not for *chiaroscuro*.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 374.

hensive work. 'His drawings,' says Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> were 'hasty and slight, but in some instances elaborately finished with pen and ink and tinted.' He lived from 1696 to 1779. His 'views,' originally issued in separate numbers, were collected and published in 1774, by Robert Sayer of Fleet Street, in three folio volumes, with the title *Buck's Antiquities*; or 'venerable Remains of above 400 Castles, Monasteries, Palaces, etc., etc.,' with nearly 100 views of 'Cities and Chief Towns.' During the first six years (1720 to 1725 according to dates on the prints) the name of 'S. Buck' alone appears upon the plates. That of 'N. Buck' is added in 1726. The drawing in these early views is feeble even to childishness. The subjects chosen are, curiously enough, the same which, a hundred years after, were treated by the greatest of landscape painters in some of the finest of his works in water-colours. They are chiefly the Abbeys of Yorkshire (Nos. 230-235, etc., in vol. ii.). A comparison of No. 320,<sup>2</sup> 'Bolton Abbey—Samuel Buck del. 1720 et sculp.,' with Turner's drawing of the same ruin engraved by Wallis in the 'Picturesque Beauties of England and Wales,' 1838, would exhibit the two extremes of landscape art and landscape engraving. In these early prints of the series there is little or no imitation of actual texture. Ruined walls have none of the look of crumbling stone. Edged with fringes of vegetation neatly trimmed, like whiskers, they are themselves perfectly smooth, as if cut out in wood or card,<sup>3</sup> showing marvellous coherence in broken arches and masonry. The sky is usually expressed by a few horizontal strokes for clouds, or, it may be, some scanty indications of rounded cumuli. Generally, a large portion of the paper is left blank, all but near objects being simply omitted. By 1730 there is more feeling of texture, more general tone is introduced, and the perspective is more consistent. The improvement continues for the next half-dozen years. Some plates of 1738 and the year or two which follow are in a different manner, with more freedom of touch and atmospheric softness. The views of 'Cities and Chief Towns' (about 10 × 23 inches large, and extending across two pages) are rarely such as could be seen from an attainable point, and sometimes even partake of the

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of the English School.*

<sup>2</sup> The numbers and dates given are those of the copy in the British Museum Library.

<sup>3</sup> Batty Langley's drawings of so-called 'Gothic' architecture, published in 1742, Mr. Adams declares to be 'suggestive of cast-iron.'—*Ubi supra.*

character of the bird's-eye representations of an earlier type. Numbers, for reference to a footnote, and even names at length, are printed over the face of the subjects ; and that of a river may often be seen swimming in mid-stream, and helping the eye to distinguish land from water. So indeterminate is the manner of expression. A careful continuous view of the London bank of the Thames from Millbank to the Tower, which extends through five numbers, leaves little to desire as a strictly topographic record. In the latest town views, and in some of the gentlemen's seats, there is a better grasp of the subject as a whole. The foreground is often graceful, and figures and animals give interest and reality to the scene and show the habits and costumes of the time. In the other plates the incidents are rare ; unless it be in connection with water subjects, where shipping and boats are plentiful, and afford specimens of the high-pooped vessels of the period. It is difficult, however, to trace, year by year, the progress of improvement, as some of the dates upon the copper having been altered after repairs, the prints do not always bear true evidence of the year when a plate was first issued.

Contemporary works of the same class, though of various degrees of merit, were much of the same average quality as Buck's views. Topography had greatly declined since the days of Loggan, Burghers, and Hollar, and had not as yet regained new strength. In *Dr. Stukeley's* antiquarian publications (1740 to 1743), for example, the views are contemptible.

But the art of engraving had sunk so low as to be incapable of doing justice to drawings of any artistic refinement. Boydell declares<sup>1</sup> that in or about 1740, when he was apprenticed to Toms, there were no engravers of any eminence in this country. This appears to be strictly true with regard to landscape. And in 'historical' engraving (so-called) Vertue, and perhaps Hogarth, had hitherto stood alone as representatives of native talent. Better times were soon to follow, and at the end of the same decade, when the art had been studied by young Englishmen abroad, an important school of engraving was about to arise in this country.<sup>2</sup> But many more years had to elapse before the best hands came to be employed in translating for the general eye the works of our topographic draftsmen.

*Boydell* himself, who did so much by his liberality and enterprise

<sup>1</sup> Preface to his collection of views republished in 1790.

<sup>2</sup> See *Pye's Patronage of British Art*, 54, 55.



to foster native talent for art, did indeed assist by the work of his own hand, and, with such limited graphic power as he possessed, in raising the level even of this branch of art. The first step towards the acquirement of his fortune was the publication by him, in 1741, when he was a young man of twenty-two, of some shilling views in and about London. They afterwards were extended to other parts of England, and included *Castles and Mountainous Views in Wales*, and were carried on till 1755. They were certainly a considerable advance upon Stukeley, and even upon Buck. 'These views,' says John Pye,<sup>1</sup> writing in 1845, 'looked at now, the distance of nearly a century from their date of publication, are remarkable evidence of the changes which that space of time has made, alike in the various localities they represent, in the public taste for works of art, and in the state of art itself. In the present day such talent as they evince would not enable an artist to live; yet they originated for Mr. Boydell the fame and fortune which he acquired.'

Among the topographic prints of this period there were twelve views of *Monasteries, Castles, Ancient Churches and Monuments in the County of Suffolk*, drawn and etched by John Joshua Kirby, 8vo, 1748. These, with a number of others, were made by him for an intended history of that county, whereof his father was a local antiquary. Kirby's name became well known afterwards by his activity in the affairs of his profession, and his career as a draftsman is linked with later and more artistic times by a tradition that it originated in an early friendship with a much more distinguished man, *Thomas Gainsborough*. Born in 1716, he was eleven years old when that painter came into being, and his friend had attained that age when Kirby began business as a coach and house painter at Ipswich. In that town Gainsborough came to settle with his wife in 1745, and it is said to have been he who inspired Kirby with ambition to try his hand at landscape, the result being these topographic views. Others followed, engraved by John Wood, who worked for Boydell. In 1754 Kirby read three lectures on perspective at the St. Martin's Lane Academy. He became F.R.S. and F.S.A., and taught architectural drawing to George III. when Prince of Wales. He published some works on perspective, one of which is *Dr. Brook Taylor's Method of Perspective made Easy, &c.*, 4to,

<sup>1</sup> *Patronage of British Art*, 57 n.



1754, for the frontispiece whereof Hogarth designed a famous caricature.<sup>1</sup> His architectural drawings, some of which are preserved at Windsor Castle, show considerable mastery in the management for such limited purposes of transparent water-colours.

Among the topographic drawings of this period should be mentioned those of English landscapes, with views of towns and buildings, made by *John Baptiste Claude Chatelaine* (or *Chatelain*), the engraver, some of which he etched and published in a little book, now very scarce, entitled *Fifty Small Original and Elegant Views of the most splendid Churches, Villages, Rural Prospects, and Masterly Pieces of Architecture adjacent to London*, 8vo, 1750. The drawings for these are said to be 'hatched with chalk and thinly tinted with colour, having a very unpleasing coarseness of effect.'<sup>2</sup>

Besides the draftsmen, strictly so called, of topographic subjects during the period above mentioned, there were also certain painters in oil who practised in the same line, and from whose pictures contemporary engravings were made. Among them was *Anthony Highmore*, son of Joseph Highmore, the latter of whom was best known as a portrait painter. But his works survive only in eight large prints of Kensington and Hampton Court, engraved by John Tinney about 1740. *Samuel Scott*, who painted marine subjects as well as London views, is better known, and, besides painting in oil, was one of the early draftsmen in water-colours. Walpole goes so far as to call him the father of that art. He was born in London about 1710, and died at Bath in 1772.

<sup>1</sup> Hogarth's drawing for this print was in the Esdaile collection, and afterwards in that of the late Dr. Percy, and sold at Christie's on 17 April, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> MS. notes by the late John W. Papworth, kindly furnished by his brother Mr. Wyatt Papworth, F.R.I.B.A.

## CHAPTER II

## SANDBY AND THE RISE OF EXHIBITIONS

Paul and Thomas Sandby—Born at Nottingham—Military draftsmen at the Tower—The Stuart rebellion—Go to Scotland—Paul's etchings—At Windsor—Founding of Art Societies—Influence of exhibitions—P. Sandby's art—Want of materials—Elected R.A.—T. Sandby's career—Paul at St. George's Row—Teacher at Woolwich—Patrons—Sir Joseph Banks—Charles Greville—Aquatint engraving—Sandby's water-colours—His work as an engraver.

SUCH was the condition of topography in the middle of the last century, when a draftsman came into the field who had taste and originality enough to bring new influences to bear upon the work, and infuse an element of fine art into this kind of illustration. The year 1752, when *Paul Sandby* came to reside with his brother Thomas at Windsor, and set up there as an artist, was an epoch of importance in the story which these pages have to tell. The two brothers were born in Nottingham, and came of an old county family, but are said to have begun life by keeping a school together in their native town. If so, they must have been singularly young preceptors. For we are further told by the same authority<sup>1</sup> that, by the interest of the borough member, they obtained an introduction to the military drawing office of the Tower of London in 1741, when, if the dates of their births be correctly given, Thomas was twenty and Paul only sixteen. It is probable that the elder went there first, and the younger followed in 1746, when he was twenty-one years old.<sup>2</sup>

In this course of military drawing the brothers were doubtless

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>2</sup> Biographers are not agreed as to the dates. Bryan, Pilkington, and others give 1732 as the date of Paul's birth, and say that he came to London at the age of fourteen (i.e. in 1746), and, after studying for about two years at the Tower, was in 1748 appointed draftsman to the Scotch survey. Redgrave, with others, gives 1725 as the date of his birth, and sends him to the Tower in 1741 (i.e. at sixteen), and to Scotland in 1746. In William Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy* (2 vols. 1865-6), 1746 is given as the date of Paul Sandby's going to the Tower, 1725 as that of his birth, and 1753-4 of his quarrel with Hogarth, as to which see below.

drilled into habits of neatness which ever after characterized their work. *Thomas Sandby* was in time appointed draftsman to the Chief Engineer in Scotland, where, being at Fort William on duty, he was so fortunate as to be able to give the first news to Government of the landing of the Young Pretender in June 1745. In the campaign which followed he was draftsman to the Duke of Cumberland, and an eyewitness of the battle of Culloden in the ensuing year. An interesting sketch which he made of the field is preserved at Windsor Castle.<sup>1</sup>

Redgrave, in his Dictionary, asserts that Tom Sandby also followed the Duke in his Flanders campaigns. There is in the Queen's collection a view by him of 'the Diest, from the camp at Meldart,' dated 1747; and Mr. William Sandby has some undated sketches of the camp near Maestricht, &c.<sup>2</sup> When the Stuart rebellion had been crushed, Tom Sandby received the peaceful post of Deputy Ranger of Windsor Great Park, of which the Duke of Cumberland was Ranger; and his brother Paul was sent to Scotland as draftsman to a survey of the Northern and Western Highlands undertaken by Government for the improvement of the roads. In the romantic scenery by which he was now surrounded, the artist element in Paul Sandby's disposition asserted its predominance. He drew the plans required of him, but at the same time indulged his pencil in making picturesque sketches. After a time, growing weary of his allotted task, and taking more and more delight in this employment of his leisure, he abandoned the military career for that of the artist. To the practice of topographic drawing he thus brought the correct training of the surveyor's office, and with it a free habit of sketching from nature, for which he had enjoyed opportunities such as had fallen to the lot of few of his predecessors.

For the most part, the sketches which he made in Scotland scarcely prepare us to expect the devotion to accurate local truth which he exhibits in subsequent works. They are graceful combinations of hill and dale, foliage, rock, and cloud, with cattle and figures combined in easy grouping. We know them chiefly in a series of spirited etchings, mostly on a small scale, published for him (by Messrs. Ryland & Bryce) on his return to London. These have nothing in them of dry topography, nor much indeed of local character.

<sup>1</sup> It was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in the winter of 1877-78; and in a loan collection of works by the brothers Sandby, at Nottingham in 1884.

<sup>2</sup> All these were exhibited at Nottingham in 1884.



In a larger 'East View of Stirling Castle,' dated 1751, and a 'West View of the City of Edinburgh,' published by Robert Sayer and Hen. Overton, 1753 (with French title added), he however appears already as an able topographic artist.

Thus in the commencement of his career he showed some of the skill as an engraver which, later in life, he turned to an important account as an aid to landscape art. 'His style of etching,' says a well-informed critic, 'has much of the freedom of Rooker, Vivares, and Chatelain. In the works of these artists, and of T. Major, will be found the first examples of free as well as finished style, which, owing to the prevalent character given to it by etching, constituted the peculiar excellence of the practice of landscape line engraving in this country from about the middle of the eighteenth century.'<sup>1</sup>

A few of Sandby's etchings, dated September 1750, are inscribed 'etched on the spot.' Among them are clever and characteristic figures, both inserted in the landscapes and drawn separately. One portrays, in a half-length group, some of the company, perhaps the host too, at 'John Balfour's Coffee-house at Edinburgh, 1752,' with a humorous programme of a concert in the background. Another trio of likenesses is inscribed 'Etched from the Life on Board a Scotch Ship,' of which it represents 'The Cook, Captain and Mait.' These tell us something of the lively sense of humour which, added to a kind heart and the bearing of a gentleman, made Paul Sandby a general favourite in society, and also furnished him, when he chose to use it, with a not inefficient weapon in professional controversy.

It was with these antecedents that the painter took up his residence, in 1752, with the Deputy Ranger at Windsor. His position, with the high connections his brother had formed, was one which, while it held out promise of advancement to the young man of talent that he had proved himself to be, gave to both the Sandbys some voice in the deliberations of the world of art. Paul entered industriously upon the work of his calling, sketching everything in the neighbourhood, and at the same time took an active part in promoting the interests of the profession he had espoused.

The time was one of national awakening in matters of taste. In this year, 1752, Reynolds returned to England. Zuccarelli came too, and Cipriani the year after. Wilson was still in Italy, and Gainsborough at Ipswich. The talents of several of our best engravers

<sup>1</sup> *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 379, &c.



(Strange, Woollett, and others) had already begun to be acknowledged. British artists of ability were springing into existence. But they were not as yet associated in any public body, regularly organized to promote the joint interests of their craft. They had educated themselves at a subscription studio in Peter's Court, St. Martin's Lane, founded by Hogarth some twenty years before, where each man paid his quota to defray the rent and provide a living model. They called it an 'academy,' and there seems to have been some kind of teaching, for, as aforesaid, Joshua Kirby lectured there on perspective. But there were no regular professorships, and no pecuniary endowment. Hogarth indeed provided some furniture which originally belonged to his father-in-law Sir James Thornhill, who had in his life-time made an unsuccessful endeavour to set up a school of art. In the middle of the last century, the 'St. Martin's Lane Academy' was our artists' *alma mater*. Their club, and chief place of rendezvous for discussing the affairs of the profession, was the Turk's Head Tavern, then standing at the corner of Greek Street and Compton Street, Soho. It was there that, in the early years of King George the Third's reign, Sir Joshua Reynolds united with Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, and others in founding the famous literary 'Club.' Shortly afterwards the tavern was removed to the neighbouring Gerrard Street.<sup>1</sup>

We do not hear, however, of Sandby's studying at St. Martin's Lane. There could not have been much for a landscape painter to learn there; and he had been to a better school in the Highlands.

In 1753 the first attempt was made in London to found a public academy of painting, sculpture, and architecture. But it proved abortive. A copy of the prospectus is reprinted in Ireland's 'Hogarth,' which, being addressed to Paul Sandby, is evidence that he had already some standing in the profession. In the following year, 1754, the Society of Arts was founded. It gave direct encouragement to the practice of drawing, by the award of premiums to young students of both sexes. In 1755 a more hopeful scheme than that of 1753 was set on foot for the establishment of a general institution, this time

<sup>1</sup> See Laurence Hutton's *Literary Landmarks of London*, 1885. 'The Turk's Head Tavern, Gerrard Street, Soho, the common rendezvous,' in Wilson's time, 'for all the metropolitan artists who professed ability approximating to renown.'—A. Pasquin, quoted, *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 92.

under the attractive name of a 'Royal' Academy. It was not, however, intended to rest on Court favour, but on the support of the public at large. In the list of the provisional committee the name of Thomas Sandby appears, in company with those of Reynolds and other leading artists of the day.

This project, which like the former came to nothing, was also the occasion of some warm party feeling in the artist world. During these disputes Paul Sandby was bold enough to exercise his talent for caricature in an attack upon the arch-satirist of his day, the veteran Hogarth himself, who was on various grounds opposed to the new scheme. The subject of Sandby's burlesque was the celebrated *Analysis of Beauty* which the great painter had published in 1753. The caricaturist was afterwards ashamed of having turned into ridicule so valuable a work by so eminent a man, and showed his respect for the author by suppressing the plates which he had etched.

The publication of Hogarth's *Analysis* was in fact one of the signs of an age wherein the philosophic essence of fine art was beginning to engage the attention of cultivated minds. When abstract theories of beauty came to be formulated, and applied to works both of nature and art, earnest students like Sandby, who, instead of confining themselves to the imitation of old masters, drew from nature and reasoned on what they drew, had a better chance of intelligent appreciation. Hogarth's treatise led to Burke's *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful* in 1756; and to other thoughtful writings and discussions which followed, and, in spite of errors, and the narrowness of some of the views then entertained, tended to bring to maturity a taste for fine art.

In the next attempt, made a few years later, namely in 1759, by a combination of artists, to obtain more effective public recognition, Hogarth and the Sandbys are found acting in unison. The object now was, not to establish a teaching academy for students, but to benefit full-blown practitioners, by means of a public exhibition of their works. Pye, in his 'Patronage of British Art,'<sup>1</sup> has insisted that a main object of the scheme was to raise a fund for the relief of artists in distress. But human nature must have altered during the last century and a half if the projectors had not also an eye to the advantage to be derived from a general show-room as a means of advertising artists' works with a view to sale.

The idea had been suggested by the popularity of a collection of

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 91, 95.

paintings presented by their authors to the Foundling Hospital, which, being there on view, had become a fashionable source of attraction. The result of this new agitation was the display, in the year 1760, of sixty-nine works of art, including 'Pictures,' 'Sculpture, Models, &c.,' and 'Drawings and Engravings,' at some rooms then occupied by the Society of Arts, in the Strand, opposite to Beaufort Buildings.<sup>1</sup> This was the first of the many exhibitions of works on sale by living British artists, which from that time have been annually held, ever increasing in size and multitude, until in our own day their name is legion.

Next year the association broke into two societies, which held exhibitions concurrently for many years. The more important of them, to which the leading artists mostly belonged, occupied a great room at Spring Gardens, and received a charter of incorporation from King George the Third, in 1765. But this society was again divided by a secession of its chief members in 1768; and the seceders, among whom were Paul and Thomas Sandby, secured the King's more immediate patronage, and became the *Royal Academy* which now exists.

What concerns us here is the influence of these earlier exhibitions upon water-colour art. When a new outlet was thus provided for artistic talent, an important change took place in the connection between draftsman and engraver. Hitherto the worker on copper had furnished the sole medium through which the designer's art could be presented to the public eye. Now their relations were altered. Gradually they came to be reversed. The draftsman had found a double market for his produce. It had now become his interest to make his drawing attractive for its own sake, and desirable to possess as an original and unique work of art, besides being suited to the publisher's purpose of multiplying it by the agency of the press. In course of time, but not yet, what had been an accessory was to become the principal. Instead of drawings being made for the purpose of suggesting what engravings were to be, engravings were to be used as after-reminders of, or in some respects incomplete substitutes for, drawings. In that after-time, the water-colour artist, mainly by the charm of colour, was able to impart attractions to his drawing with which no print could vie. He worked to satisfy a new demand, and, receiving lucrative employment from a new class of patrons, he finally became as independent of the engraver as the painters in oil had been from immemorial time. How largely, nevertheless, even to

<sup>1</sup> Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, p. 92 n.



the latest period, many water-colour painters have still been indebted for professional emolument to the publishers of prints and illustrated works will amply appear in the course of the ensuing narrative.

The topographic drawings of Sandby's school hold an intermediate position between the two classes of draftsmen above described. The style he adopted was admirably suited for the reproduction of his drawings by engraving, and they at the same time possessed qualities and beauties of their own which gave them a title to be regarded as independent works of art.

Sandby also painted in oil and in tempera. But the style which he made specially his own, and in which his chief influence was exercised, is that which is familiarly regarded as characteristic of our early water-colour school, the tinted drawings outlined with a pen, shaded in grey, and finished with washes of local colour.

Artists' colourmen were unknown in those days, and Whatman's paper was not yet made at the Turkey Mills. In the collection<sup>1</sup> of Mr. Edward Basil Jupp, F.S.A., there are preserved two curious letters from Gainsborough, in the first of which, dated 10 November, 1767, that artist, then residing at Bath, requests Mr. Dodsley, who published Anstey's 'New Bath Guide,' to send him some of the same sort of paper as that on which the fifth edition of that amusing poem was printed, it being what the artist had long been in search of for making washed drawings upon.

The second letter is as follows :—

'Bath : 26th November, 1767.

'To Jas. Dodsley, Pall Mall, London.

'Sir,—I beg you to accept my sincerest thanks for the favour you have done me concerning the Paper for Drawings. I had set my Heart upon getting some of it, as it is so completely what I have long been in search of. The mischief of that you were so kind as to enclose is not only the small wires, but a large Cross wire at about |            | this distance, which the other has none of, nor hardly any of the impression of the smallest wire. I wish, Sir, that one of my Landskips, such as I could make you upon that paper, would prove a sufficient inducement for you to make still further enquiry.

<sup>1</sup> See *A Descriptive List of Original Drawings, Engravings, Autograph Letters, and Portraits, illustrating the Catalogues of the Society of Artists of Great Britain from its commencement in the year 1760 to its close in the year 1791, in the possession of Edward Basil Jupp, F.S.A., 1871, 4to, privately printed.* A presentation copy was bequeathed by Mr. William Smith to the South Kensington Museum.



I should think my time well bestow'd, however little the Value you might with reason set upon it.

‘I am, Sir, your much obliged

‘And most obedient humble servant,

‘THO. GAINSBOROUGH.

‘P.S. I am at this moment viewing the difference of that you send and the Bath guide, holding them edgeways to the light, and could cry my Eyes out to see those furrows. Upon my honor, I would give a guinea a Quire for a Doz<sup>n</sup> quire of it.’

Thus Sandby and his contemporaries had to draw on common writing-paper, with such pigments as they could get or manufacture for themselves.<sup>1</sup>

Pale and weak as their drawings may now appear, they were at the time of their production remarkable as the first English landscapes in transparent pigment in which colour was at all an element of consideration. Sandby chiefly used vegetable pigments. In his early drawings he employed the reed pen for outline. In his second and improved style he subdued the rigidity of his outline and, by repeating the tints, obtained rich and deep colour in the foreground.<sup>2</sup>

Paul Sandby contributed to the exhibition in the Strand in 1760, and to those in Spring Gardens from 1761 to 1768, about thirty works in all, including oil pictures and drawings in tempera. After this date he had added the letters R.A. to his name, and could exhibit only at the Academy.

*Tom Sandby* had also become an Academician, and was appointed the first Professor of Architecture to the Royal Academy. He continued to reside at Windsor, where he retained for life his office of Deputy Ranger, planning Virginia Water, and also practising as an architect. With a pencil less prolific than his brother's, and exercising less influence on future art, he nevertheless takes rank with him among the landscape topographers of his time. Redgrave even gives him credit for ‘more spirit and artistic feeling’ than Paul's. Some early views of his native town, dated 1741–43, are in the Art Museum there, and four are engraved in Dr. Charles Deering's *Nottinghamia Vetus et Nova*, 4to, 1751. But these, though correctly drawn, follow the conventional manner of their period, and are certainly much

<sup>1</sup> *Catalogue of the Sandby Exhibition*, 1884.

<sup>2</sup> Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy*.

inferior to his brother's view of Stirling Castle published in the same year.<sup>1</sup> In 1761 he is recorded as the exhibitor, at Spring Gardens, of (among other drawings) some views of the Falls of the Clyde. Drawings by him, mostly architectural, are in the Royal collection at Windsor, and at the British and Soane Museums. Some views in Covent Garden were engraved after him on a large scale by Edward Rooker, with the dates 1766 and 1768. Graves<sup>2</sup> finds two exhibits by him at the Society of Artists, and nine at the Royal Academy, between 1767 and 1782. He lived till 1798.

By the time when Paul Sandby had assumed the rank of Royal Academician, he had left Windsor and come to reside in London. The catalogues of 1764-5 describe him of 'Du Four's Court, Broad Street, Carnaby Market;' and in 1766-8 he is in 'Poland Street.' In or before 1773 he took a house in St. George's Row (No. 4), on the north side of Hyde Park, near Tyburn turnpike, where he resided during the latter part of his life. The gate, which stood a little westward of the spot where now stands the Marble Arch, has since been removed, and the name of the row of houses changed to 'Hyde Park Place,' the present No. 23 being that in which Sandby lived.<sup>3</sup>

In 1768 he also received the post of principal drawing-master to the Military Academy at Woolwich, which he retained for the rest of the century.

The subjects which he exhibited at the Society of Artists tell us something of the rank and culture of his patrons and friends. The first work to which his name is attached in the catalogues is a view of Lord Harcourt's seat at Nuneham. Next year he had 'An Historical Landskip representing the Welsh bard, in Mr. Gray's celebrated ode,' which had been published about four years. The poets Gray and Mason, as well as Lord Harcourt, were among Sandby's personal friends. In 1763 he shows us that he has been among the picturesque scenery of the North and West Ridings of Yorkshire, and also sends the first of his Windsor views, representing a gate of the Castle. After this date, he has in 1764 and 1767 views at the seats of the Dukes of Devonshire, Bolton, Norfolk, and Grafton. With these exceptions he finds all his subjects at Windsor. To the friends and patrons above mentioned may be added the Earl of Buchan and Dr. Norbury of Eton.

Wealthy and cultivated amateurs were now beginning to exercise

<sup>1</sup> See above, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Artists.*

<sup>3</sup> *Catalogue of the Sandby Exhibition, 1884.*

a kind of personal patronage, which was not merely confined to the purchase of works of art, but afforded to artists means and opportunities of study, together with the elevating influence of cultured society.

This benefit Paul Sandby was one of the first to feel. He had the good fortune, by the excellence of his Windsor drawings, to attract the attention of a man of property, who not only bought about seventy of them,<sup>1</sup> but carried off the artist to scenes where he was enabled to enrich his portfolio from subjects still better suited to his pencil. This was Mr., afterwards Sir Joseph, Banks, the celebrated naturalist. He was considerably younger than Sandby. Having left Oxford in 1763, he came of age in 1764, and at the same time acquired the command of his paternal estate. In 1766 Banks visited Newfoundland, and in 1768 set out with Captain Cook on that navigator's first voyage of discovery, as naturalist to the expedition, returning home in June 1771. In 1772 he made a voyage to Iceland. It was probably after these events, and most likely in 1774, that Sandby paid his first visit to Wales; for in 1775 drawings by him representing Welsh views are named for the first time in the Royal Academy catalogues.

Besides Mr. Banks, Sandby had as a travelling companion the Hon. Charles Greville, with whom he made several sketching tours; and he was also induced by Sir Watkin W. Wynn, of Wynnstay in Denbighshire, to extend his visits to, and his illustrations of, that part of the United Kingdom. The Hon. Charles Francis Greville was the second son of Francis the first Earl of Warwick. He was born in 1749, and died, unmarried, in 1809. His brother, the Right Hon. George Greville, was born in 1746, succeeded to the title, on the death of their father, in 1773, and died in 1816. This second earl, another of Sandby's patrons, was a prominent example of the *dilettanti* of his time, and, as we shall presently see, his patronage was exercised in various ways to the advantage of the rising water-colour school.

The acquaintance with Mr. Greville led to some important results. Sandby was indebted to this friend and patron for information which induced him, when past mid-age, to resume the practice of chalcography with which he had begun his artistic career. Mr. Greville had, when abroad, been made acquainted with a new process of engraving, peculiarly adapted to the reproduction of works in Sandby's style, which afterwards proved of signal service to our native school of landscape and architectural drawing. Its name is *Aquatint*, or *Aquatinta*.

<sup>1</sup> These drawings were sold at Christie's on 23 May, 1876, and many of them were then purchased for the Queen's Collection at Windsor.



If we compare a drawing with its reproduction in a print made by engraving on metal, or rather, if we examine the condition of the plate prepared for printing, we shall observe that, whereas the pen lines of the drawing are reproduced by etched or engraved lines in the plate, broad washes of colour have to be imitated by some kind of roughening of its broad surface. Aquatint engraving is a process in which the corrosion of an acid is employed to effect this roughening of the surface, as it is employed to eat out the groove of an ordinary etched line. To imitate a pen line of greater or less strength, the etcher so indents the metal to a corresponding depth. To imitate a wash, the aquatint engraver so roughens<sup>1</sup> (more or less, according to the required tone) a due area on the face of the plate. By a union of these two processes on one plate, and the use of ink of a proper colour, almost exact fac-similes can be impressed upon paper of monochrome drawings made with pen and brush. For the reproduction of designs of this kind, the advantages of such a process over the laborious imitation of shadows by an infinity of furrows and scratches separately ploughed out with a sharp tool, are too obvious to insist upon. Except in their final or tinting process, the drawings of the old school, which we are considering, were simply 'line and wash,' and were thus exactly suited to the aquatint method, if that art could be brought to perfection.

The honour of inventing aquatint engraving is ascribed to a French amateur, the Abbé de St. Non, author of an illustrated *Voyage Pittoresque des Royaumes de Naples et de Sicile*, executed about 1767. 'Several plates,' says Bryan,<sup>2</sup> 'were engraved by him.' The painter, Jean Baptiste Le Prince, learned the process from St. Non, and himself employed it successfully. Le Prince is said to have sold the secret to Mr. Greville, who suggested its use to Paul Sandby for the reproduction of his Welsh sketches. Sandby took the hint, and applying himself to the task with his wonted intelligence and zeal, not only acquired great practical skill in the new art, but brought the art itself to a much higher state of perfection.

The immediate result of his labour was the production of the first

<sup>1</sup> A broad distinction between an aquatint and a mezzotint plate (apart from the methods of producing them) is that, in the first, the roughening takes the form of a net-work of minute furrows lying entirely *below* the original surface, while the second is covered with a multitude of little points scratched up and projecting like very fine bristles *above* that surface.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers.*



of four<sup>1</sup> sets, containing twelve plates each, of views in Wales, drawn and engraved by his own hand.<sup>2</sup> The title-page of this series is itself a beautiful specimen of aquatinta as applied to ornamental design. Within an elegant Greek border, the following words appear in white letters upon a rich dark ground: '*XII Views in Aquatinta from Drawings taken on the spot in South Wales, Dedicated to the Honourable Charles Greville and Joseph Banks Esquire by their ever grateful and obliged servant Paul Sandby R.A. MDCCLXXV. N° 1.*' Two of these plates bear the above date, and one, of 'South Gate, Cardiff Castle,' is inscribed 'P. Sandby, 1774.' This may possibly be the earliest English aquatint.<sup>3</sup> Another series of twelve plates, mostly dated 'Sep. 1776,' have their subjects in North Wales; and a third has the date 'Sep. 1777' on the separate plates, although the first of them which has a title has the inscription 'XII Views in Wales 1776,' on the back of a cart.

In these Welsh views, more particularly those of the earlier dates, the engraver, while availing himself of the aquatint or resin ground for his broad shadows and much of the detail, has given additional depth and spirit by a free use of the point, and employed other devices to heighten the effect. In subsequent plates he trusted more to the even tones of the aquatint.

Architectural antiquities were not the only subjects that Sandby sketched in Wales. Some of the views belong (to use the nomenclature of Turner<sup>4</sup>) to the categories of 'mountainous' and 'pastoral' landscape. These suffice to show how much too low a place in the history of art is given to Sandby by those who say that his landscapes did not get beyond mere topography.<sup>5</sup> Besides effective composition and graceful drawing, there is a natural freshness in the rural scenes, and trees and foliage are depicted with truth and beauty rarely equalled by more modern artists.<sup>6</sup> There is a view of 'Llanberris Lake, Castle Dol Badern and the Great Mountain Snowden,' which

<sup>1</sup> Only three sets are in the British Museum Print Room; and the dates on the plates seem to show that, as bound, the second and third should be transposed to give the true sequence.

<sup>2</sup> One, of the Episcopal Palace of St. David's, is inscribed 'L. Wynn Del.'

<sup>3</sup> In the exhibition of the Society of Artists, 1774, there were a number of prints 'in imitation of washed drawings,' engraved by F. Vispre, F.S.A. after Zucchi and others, and executed in the same manner.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Liber Studiorum*.

<sup>5</sup> See Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>6</sup> See 'Chepstow Castle,' and 'Denefawr Castle,' numbered IIII and XI in the last-mentioned series.

conveys a due sense of magnitude, and may profitably be compared with Buck's feeble attempt above mentioned at the same subject, on the one hand ; and, on the other, with Turner's poetical rendering of it in his 'England and Wales.' In these aquatints of Sandby's there may perhaps be recognised an early foreshadowing of Turner's great work the '*Liber Studiorum*,' the plates of which are nearly of a size with Sandby's Welsh views, and for the first of which the aquatint process was actually employed.<sup>1</sup>

To the year 1776, if the dates on the prints are to be trusted, belongs a set of large aquatints of Warwick Castle, published by Boydell, and dedicated by Paul Sandby to the 'Right Hon. Geo. Greville, Earl of Warwick ;' and to that and the following year a series of subjects at Windsor. Like the Welsh views, they were published by Sandby at St. George's Row. On the first, dated Sept. 1st, 1776, is a dedication to the Duke of Montagu. Among them, two views of the Terrace are enlivened with groups of figures of much individual character and humour. Another, representing the Castle from the Lower Court on the fifth of November, with bonfires, and a rocket going up, combines a Rembrandtesque richness in the effects of light with a Hogarthian element of humour in the crowd of revellers.

The living incidents employed by Sandby in the treatment of his subjects may often be used as a distinctive test for the classification of the subjects themselves. Thus, in picturesque compositions which do not seek to portray a particular place, they are but landscape figures of the established old-master type, with cattle and the like, and no individual character. But, when local facts and objects have to be rendered, he gives us the people of his day, as they lived, and becomes their true historian. This was the case in his Windsor views ; and a few years afterwards he recorded, in the same graphic way, a feature of the time so vividly that we seem, in looking at his work, to live with him a hundred years ago. In some large prints, dated 1781, &c., he depicts the soldiers' camps in Hyde Park, St. James's Park, the Museum Garden, and on Blackheath, Coxheath, and Warley Common, which were formed in 1780, the year of the Lord George Gordon riots. The original drawings of some, if not all, of these encampment scenes are in the Queen's Collection.

Sandby also worked from drawings by other hands, generally of

<sup>1</sup> See Rawlinson's *Turner's Liber Studiorum*, and Pye and Roget's *Notes on Turner's Liber Studiorum*.

foreign subjects ; though he did not himself travel abroad. There are mentioned twenty-seven views (engraved by him after P. S. Grignon and others) in North America and the West Indies, obl. folio, 1768, and 4to, 1781. Some folio views in New Jersey 'painted and engraved' by Paul Sandby from sketches on the spot by Governor Pownall, must have been executed before 1769, as the letters R.A. are not affixed to Sandby's name. He also executed in aquatint a series of large plates of classical antiquities in Greece and Asia Minor, after stained drawings made, between 1763 and 1766, by William Pars, A.R.A. (born 1742, died 1782), who was sent out by the Dilettanti Society to accompany Dr. Chandler and Mr. Revett as draftsman. The dates of execution of some are 1777 and 1779, and of publication 1779 and 1780. He also engraved, on a large scale, architectural views in South Italy after Fabris, and Clérissseau,<sup>1</sup> some of which, dated 1777-8, are published by himself, and some in conjunction with A. Robertson. Bryan mentions also 'a series of prints exhibiting the sports of the Carnival at Rome from drawings by David Allan ;<sup>2</sup> and the designs for Allan Ramsay's "Gentle Shepherd," by the same artist.'

Some large views of Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth, and Worcester, bearing date 1 Nov. 1778, also show Paul Sandby's skill as an engraver in another style.

It is important to distinguish those of the above-mentioned plates which he executed himself from his own designs, from certain prints which were engraved after Sandby's drawings by other hands. The former are, throughout, original works representing the artist as a 'painter-engraver' (*peintre-graveur*), and they give a much higher and more just impression of his power than the latter. When he and another have engraved from the same drawing of his, the contrast is sufficiently striking.

A series of 150 small prints, known as 'Sandby's Views,' must nevertheless be noticed as one of the landmarks in the history of that kind of local illustration which gave their chief employment to the earlier water-colour draftsmen. They will have to be dealt with in a fresh chapter.

<sup>1</sup> Charles Louis Clérissseau, born 1722, died 1820 ; a French artist who drew in water-colours, and assisted Robert Adam in illustrating the *Ruins of Spalatro*, published in 1764.

<sup>2</sup> David Allan (born 1744, died 1796) was one of the early water-colour painters of figure subjects.



## CHAPTER III

## GENTLEMEN'S SEATS—ARCHITECTURAL TOPOGRAPHY

Wedgwood's Russian service—An impetus to topographic art—Kearsley's 'Copper Plate Magazine'—E. Rooker—M. A. Rooker—'Virtuosi's Museum'—'Oxford Almanack'—Watts's, Milton's, and Angus's 'seats'—Advance in line-engraving—Woollett—Byrne—Hearne—Middiman—Byrne's 'Antiquities'—Rooker and Hearne compared—Architectural draftsmen—The Maltons—Carter—Wheatley—Marlow.

THE last quarter of the eighteenth century was the period of a remarkable revival in the taste for topography, which manifested itself in a constant succession of published works, containing views of objects of interest in the British Isles. The fashion seems to have had its rise in the following series of events.

In or shortly before the year 1773, the Empress Catherine of Russia made a proposal to Messrs. Wedgwood and Bentley, the great Staffordshire potters, 'for the manufacture of a vast cream-ware service, for every purpose of the table;' and directed that on every one of the numerous pieces of which it should be composed there should be enamelled a different view representing 'British scenery.' It was a prodigious task, extending far beyond the usual limits of fictile or decorative art. But Wedgwood and his partner were men of great energy, and proved themselves equal to the occasion. At first they staggered a little at the proposal. There was no full recognition as yet of the 'beauties' of England and Wales; and the materials for such a work had to be sought for far and wide. Bentley proposed to despatch draftsmen at once all over the kingdom to take views—'*real* views and *real* buildings.' Wedgwood, estimating the required number at two thousand, declared that 'all the gardens in England would scarcely furnish subjects sufficient;' and, moreover, that to copy pictures and do their work tolerably would take no less than two or three years. He was 'perswaded' that there were 'not enough Gothique Buildings in Great Britain' for their purpose. The partners, however, set zealously to work. Besides sending persons about with a camera



obscura, they ransacked the print-shops, and made every inquiry they could think of for 'the most embellished views, the most beautiful Landships, with Gothique Ruins, Grecian Temples, and the most Elegant Buildings' which our country could furnish. From these sources they eventually succeeded in obtaining a sufficient variety of subjects to execute the order, and painted on the different articles 1,282 views, no two of which were alike. They were executed in monochrome, 'in enamel of a delicate black, which permits a shading and finish.' The service when complete was exhibited for a month in June and July, 1774, before going to Russia, at the manufacturers' new show-rooms in Greek Street, Soho, and became a great source of attraction in the London world. The catalogue described it as, 'A Complete set of Porcelain or Queen's ware, ornamented with different views of the ruins, country-houses, parks, gardens, and picturesque landscapes of Great Britain;' and a short descriptive preface states that 'the principal subjects are ruins, remarkable edifices, parks, gardens, and other natural objects which adorn Great Britain, and which merit the attention of all travellers;' and further, that 'the landscapes depict modern as well as ancient buildings—every taste studied—natural scenes as well as interiors.'

The exhibition of this Russian service was an epoch in the history of British topographic art. The production, or reproduction, of the large number of views, thus found to be gratifying to an elegant taste of society, seems to have acted as a fresh impetus to that class of drawing, and also to have directed the course of the ensuing flood of activity into a particular channel, in which it long remained.

Some of the measures which had been taken by the Staffordshire potters in the accomplishment of their task throw a light upon the state of patronage in their day. The views on the Empress's tea-cups, &c., had been partly copied from existing pictures and prints, and partly from new drawings made for the manufacturers from the objects themselves. In their choice of the latter as subjects of representation Wedgwood had had a practical eye to business, and showed himself keenly alive to the tastes and requirements of customers at home. His first thought of picturesque material was, as we have seen, confined within garden walls and park palings; and the only drawings we hear of as ordered by the firm were of the houses and pleasure-grounds of the wealthy. Wedgwood had written from Etruria to his partner in London for a camera to 'take to the

neighbouring gentlemen's seats.' 'I find it will be in my power,' he says, 'to pay some acceptable compliments in that way.' This policy was successful. The county families of Stafford were 'highly pleased' with their priority. 'From what I perceive in the little we have done,' he continues, 'I could make it well worth my while to pursue the same plan all over the kingdom.' But he has a fear of making enemies of gentlemen who might think themselves neglected, either by the omission of the seat of one 'when his neighbour's was taken, or by putting it upon a small piece, or not flattering it sufficiently.'<sup>1</sup>

The wary manufacturer had rightly gauged the popular estimate of 'British scenery,' for henceforth views of country mansions formed the staple of its graphic illustration. The kind of interest which prevailed in the time of Kip and Badeslade appears to have revived. Habitations of the nobility and gentry again engaged the pencil of the topographic draftsman. In more modern times the idea has still been cherished that mansions of the rich are what constitute the essential charm of rural scenery. Who can forget the typical Yorkshire servant of Mr. Kinglake's travelling party, 'who rode doggedly on' from Belgrade to Stamboul 'in his pantry jacket, looking out for *gentlemen's seats*'?<sup>2</sup> Views of towns, ruins, and country mansions again became the subjects which the draftsman had to depict, together with such so-called landscape as had been arranged by professors of gardening. Rural scenery was as yet of but small account.

It seems to have been in 1774, the year of the exhibition of Wedgwood's Russian service, that a series of prints began to be published by G. Kearsley, of 46 Fleet Street, in quarto, with the name, *The Copper Plate Magazine, or a Monthly Treasure for the Admirers of the Imitative Arts*. Each number was to contain 'A Portrait of some celebrated Personage, some interesting Historical Subject, or some curious Perspective View—Executed by the most capital Artists of Great Britain, and calculated to enrich the cabinets of the curious, or to ornament the apartments of persons of Real Taste.' So said the prospectus. This work was continued in monthly

<sup>1</sup> The above facts are related in the *Life of Josiah Wedgwood* by the late Miss Meteyard, to whose kindness the present writer is indebted for the above extracts from a manuscript copy of the catalogue of the Russian service.

<sup>2</sup> *Etöthen*, p. 23.

numbers for three years and a half, and when complete it contained forty-two portraits, forty-two history pieces, and forty-two landscapes. The landscapes, with which alone we are concerned, were 'select views in England and Wales,' almost entirely from drawings by Paul Sandby.

The engraving of the first plates was the work of the last year in the life of an old friend and fellow-labourer of Sandby's, one *Edward Rooker*. They had etched together (after J. Collins) a set of illustrations to Tasso's *Jerusalem*, and Rooker had engraved some large views in London after Paul and Thomas Sandby respectively.<sup>1</sup> 'Ned Rooker' had a versatile talent. Besides being one of the most eminent engravers, he was reckoned the best harlequin of his time. He was now upwards of sixty, and did not live to engrave more than three plates<sup>2</sup> for the new magazine. These were published respectively on the 1st of October, November, and December, 1774. The last he did not live to see brought out, for he had died on the 22nd of November. The next print, representing 'Wynn Stay, the seat of Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.,' which appeared in the number for New Year's Day, has upon it the name 'M. A. Rooker,' and was accompanied by the following announcement:—

'It is with the utmost concern that we acquaint our encouragers of the death of Mr. Edward Rooker, whose loss we deplore not only as an artist, but as a man. His demise is a public calamity, and is universally lamented. To console us, however, in some degree, we are convinced by the perspective view annexed, that genius and taste is, in some instances, hereditary; and that Mr. Rooker junior inherits all those eminent abilities as an artist, which were so justly and universally attributed to his father.'

<sup>1</sup> The writer (before quoted) on the 'British School of Engraving' in the *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 379, &c. (1832) says of E. Rooker: 'To his architectural subjects he gave a richness and freedom that have never been surpassed;' and of the illustrations to Tasso, which he cites as the finest examples of that engraver's work: 'In the boldest and freest style, not excepting the works of Piazzetta, whose manner, or rather force, they seem to imitate, yet possess more variety in the display of foliage, trunks of trees, and other materials of landscape scenery.' A large interior of St. Paul's Cathedral, ornamented as intended by Wren (after John Gwynn, R.A., with figures by Samuel Wale, R.A.), published in 1752, is by some considered his masterpiece. There are also plates by him in Chambers's *Civil Architecture*, Stuart's *Athens*, and Adam's *Spalatro*; he engraved many of the headings of the *Oxford Almanack*, and etched four Italian subjects after Wilson. Graves enumerates eleven works exhibited by him at the Society of Artists between 1760 and 1768.

<sup>2</sup> 'Wakefield Lodge in Whitebury Forest,' probably from a drawing of Sandby's exhibited in 1767, 'Strawberry Hill,' and 'Datchet Bridge.'



The son, whose accession to the family burin was thus proclaimed, was already known as a draftsman as well as an engraver. He was now more than thirty. His father had instructed him in the use of the graver, and afterwards placed him with his friend Sandby, to be taught to draw and paint landscapes. He proved a worthy successor and a worthy pupil in his two crafts, and now holds rank with Sandby as one of the best practitioners in the early style of water-colour drawing. He is generally known as 'MICHAEL ANGELO' ROOKER, but his baptismal name was 'Michael' only. 'Angelo' was a jocular addition, originally made by Paul Sandby, and afterwards adopted by his pupil. In a holograph will he names himself 'Michael Rooker, commonly called Michael *Angelo* Rooker.'<sup>1</sup> He had exhibited 'stained drawings' as far back as 1765, as 'Mr. Rooker Junior,' at the Spring Gardens gallery. In 1768 we find him exhibiting a print there, of the 'Villa Adriana' after Wilson, under his own name, with a separate address 'at Mr. Smith's, Long Acre,' while his father resides in 'Queen's Court, Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields.' In 1769 he was admitted a student of the Royal Academy, and in the following year elected an Associate. In 1772 he exhibited a painting of Temple Bar which gained him much credit; and in the same year an edition of Sterne's works was published with some illustrations by him. His chief works in water-colour were of later date. They will be referred to more particularly in the sequel. At present we are dealing with him only as one of the engravers of Sandby's views. From 1775 to 1777 most of the landscapes in Kearsley's serial are the work of his graver.<sup>2</sup>

The 'Copper Plate Magazine,' in its original comprehensive form, then came to an end. No more 'portraits' or 'history pieces' were engraved. The topographical landscapes, however, seem to have been in greater demand; for a fresh issue was commenced under a new name, of monthly numbers, each containing three plates of Sandby's views. The title was now *The Virtuosi's Museum*, containing Select Views in England, Scotland, and Ireland; Drawn by P. Sandby, R.A., London. Printed for G. Kearsley at No. 46, near Serjeants' Inn, Fleet Street, 1778.' The form is long quarto, with letterpress to each plate, and the engraved part of the plate measures  $5\frac{1}{8}$  by  $7\frac{1}{8}$  inches. A didactic preface, after setting forth the superiority of

<sup>1</sup> Edwards's *Anecdotes*.

<sup>2</sup> Some are by Watts; a few by B. Green.



intellectual delight over sensual pleasure, proceeds in the following words :—

‘That such is the laudable design of the present undertaking no one can entertain a doubt who reflects that the student, as well as the admirer of the ingenious art of sculpture,<sup>1</sup> will be supplied with elegant engravings from the designs of one of the first artists of this kingdom at the very moderate price of one shilling for each plate, instead of the usual demand of from 2s. 6d. to 5s. made for landscapes of inferior merit.

‘What a cheap and rational amusement then will these Gentlemen possess monthly, for the same consideration that is given for one night’s admittance to the pit of a theatre ! and in the course of a year, what a beautiful addition will be made to the furniture of their apartments, for less than the value of a masquerade ticket !

‘It would be superfluous to say more of the design if the execution is answerable, which we flatter ourselves cannot fail from the great reputation of the Artists engaged ; we shall want no policy of insurance, for in the public favour we shall find an ample reward for our labours. It remains only to account for the choice of our subjects, and in this we follow an illustrious example. The renowned Empress of Russia, the magnificent patroness of every useful undertaking calculated to improve the taste and polish the manners of her subjects, without corrupting their hearts, has paid the highest compliment to the genius and taste of this country ; by procuring, at an immense expence, views of all the noblemen and gentlemen’s seats, and of every delightful spot throughout the kingdom, drawn on the spot, and painted upon setts of china dishes and plates. If these views appear so enchanting in the eyes of this great princess, surely it must afford the highest satisfaction to Britons themselves to have in their possession complete representations of them on a better plan for preservation and on much easier terms.’

‘The Virtuosi’s Museum’ continued to be published for three years, when thirty-six monthly numbers dated from 1 February, 1778, to 1 January, 1781, had appeared, containing in the whole 108 plates in the line manner, uniform with those of the ‘Copper Plate Magazine.’ Many of the subjects which Sandby himself had engraved much better in aquatint on a larger scale, including some of the encampment scenes,

<sup>1</sup> The word ‘sculpture’ for engraving, employed in that sense in the days of Evelyn’s *Sculptura*, had not yet fallen into disuse.

are here repeated.<sup>1</sup> In this new series, Rooker had a much smaller share than before. His name only appears as one, though perhaps the best, among twenty engravers,<sup>2</sup> who were employed upon the plates. He was now engaged in other work. He had followed his father as engraver for the 'Oxford Almanack,' the headings of which, executed by him for a succession of years, after his own designs, came to be highly esteemed. Like his father, too, he was connected with the stage, though he does not appear to have trod the boards as an actor. He worked with his hands and head, not with his feet, and was for several years employed as principal scene-painter to the Haymarket Theatre, under Colman's management. In the playbills of the day he was 'Signor Rookerini.'

While Sandby's views were thus in course of publication, another series of a similar kind were started by the William Watts above mentioned as one of his engravers. Watts, like 'Michael Angelo,' had been a pupil both of Edward Rooker and of Paul Sandby, but is known chiefly as an engraver. His work is entitled: *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry*; 'in a Collection of the most interesting and Picturesque Views, Engraved by W. Watts.—From Drawings by the most Eminent Artists.—With descriptions to each view.—Published by W. Watts, Kemp's Row, Chelsea. January 1st, 1779.' There are eighty plates, the subjects of which measure about 5 by 7¼ inches. This series was continued till about 1786, when Watts went abroad. At later dates he brought out other topographical works.<sup>3</sup> He afterwards became blind, but lived till comparatively modern times, and died at Cobham in Surrey in December, 1851, in his hundredth year. Redgrave, who gives us these facts, adds that he was 'a good French and Italian scholar, and a well-read man.'

Next in date is *A Collection of Select Views from the Different Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in the Kingdom of Ireland*.

<sup>1</sup> The two series of views, 42 in the *Copper Plate Magazine*, and 108 in the *Virtuosi's Museum*, afterwards became the property of Boydell, and were rearranged and republished by him in two volumes, dated 1782, 1783, with the title 'A Collection of 150 Select Views in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, drawn by Paul Sandby, R.A.' In this edition the pages are upright instead of oblong, and the title-pages and descriptive letterpress are in English and French. Vol. 1 contains 73 English, and vol. 2 contains 17 Welsh, 27 Scotch, and 33 Irish views.

<sup>2</sup> The others were W. Watts, Walker, Ryder or Rider, T. Cooke, P. Mazell, D. Lespinier, J. Morris, F. Chesham, Wm. Ellis, C. Duponchel, Jas. Fittler, E. Scott, W. Angus, J. Roberts, T. Woodyer, T. Medland, T. Collyer, T. Milton, and I. Scott.

<sup>3</sup> *Twelve Views of Bath*, 1791; *Select Views in London*, 1800; Sixty views for Sir R. Ainslie's *Turkey and Palestine*, 1801-1805.

'Engraved by *Thomas Milton*, from original drawings by the best masters.' It contains twenty-four plates, in oblong 4to, all engraved by Milton. The plates are not all dated, but the dates on those which are, extend from 1785 to 1793. Pye<sup>1</sup> says that the work was commenced in 1783. Milton was a landscape engraver of much repute. A considerable proportion of these views are pure landscape subjects, not even containing a house in sight.

In an English series which followed, and also known by the name of their engraver, William Angus, the views are strictly confined to representations of houses, standing in their parks and grounds. They were entitled: *The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Great Britain and Wales*, 'in a collection of Select Views:—Engraved by *W. Angus*, from Pictures and Drawings by the most eminent artists, with descriptions of each view.—Published by W. Angus, Gwynne's Buildings, Islington.—February 1, 1787.' The dates on the plates are from February, 1787, to September 1, 1797.

While topographers were thus re-establishing the old connection between drawing and engraving, the latter art had been making important advances. A race of line engravers was springing up in this country, whose talent had been specially cultivated with a view to the interpretation of landscape. The father of their school was *William Woollett*. The life's work of that distinguished original artist and kind, good man was now rapidly drawing to a close. He died on the 23rd of May, 1785, at the too early age of fifty, from the effects of an accident. Woollett himself had, in some of his first plates, employed his burin in the service of topography, upon the class of subjects which we have seen to be so popular—gentlemen's seats, or their surroundings; and he also at a later period engraved some continental views.<sup>2</sup> But his triumphs as a landscape engraver were in the exquisite translations which he made from pictures of a more conventional kind, and from the classic works of Richard Wilson, R.A. It was reserved for some of Woollett's immediate followers, to employ his more refined manner of engraving in aid of

<sup>1</sup> *Patronage of British Art*, 246.

<sup>2</sup> Some views in the garden of Sir Francis Dashwood at West Wycombe, engraved by him after drawings by William Hannan, were published in 1757; and there are plates, dated 1760, of Foot's Cray Place and Coombank. Two views in Waller's garden at 'Hall-Barn, Beckonsfield,' must be of the same period. He also engraved, in 1773-4, some views in Switzerland and elsewhere after drawings by Wm. Pars, A.R.A., and in 1779, the Hermitage at Warkworth, after Hearne.



the topographic draftsmen, Sandby's successors, who were the parents of the actual founders of our water-colour school.

Three of these engravers demand special notice in connection with our subject, namely *William Byrne*, *Thomas Hearne*, and *Samuel Middiman*. Their names are associated with two series of topographic prints which, appearing contemporaneously with those last mentioned, are entitled to much higher rank than theirs as works of art. In the year 1780, when Sandby, then fifty-one, sketched the soldiers in the parks, and the no-popery mob burnt Newgate, and the Academy exhibition went to Somerset House from its old quarters in Pall Mall, they were all in the prime of life. Byrne was thirty-seven, Hearne thirty-six, Middiman thirty. Hearne had been a pupil of Woollett's. Byrne, though much of his art was original, or inspired by Woollett,<sup>1</sup> had studied, first under an uncle, and then abroad under Aliamet and Wille. Like Woollett, he engraved large plates after Claude, Both, Zuccarelli, Vernet, and, last not least, Richard Wilson. Middiman is stated in Stanley's 'Bryan' to have studied under Woollett and Bartolozzi. Redgrave calls him a pupil of Byrne's. However that may be, he was an excellent line engraver, particularly noted for his skill in using the etching point.

THOMAS HEARNE, although he served a six years' apprenticeship to Woollett, and worked on many of his plates, did not go on practising as an engraver, but was led by good fortune to devote his talent to topographical drawing. Coming to London as a boy, from his native village in Wiltshire, to learn a trade, he had shown his aptness as well as his real liking, by gaining, in 1763, a premium at the Society of Arts: and when the term of his indentures expired, he, in 1771, embarked for the Leeward Islands, with their new governor Sir Ralph Payne, afterwards Lord Lavington, to draw for him their characteristic features. After more than five years occupied in this undertaking, three and a half of which were spent in the West Indies, he determined to devote himself to making topographic drawings, and leave in other competent hands the task of engraving them on copper. In 1777 Byrne and he combined their forces for the production of a work on British topography, which, while it revived a branch of that study that had been somewhat in abeyance, effected a distinct advance of

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave says 'he studied from nature and formed his own style.' The writer of the 'British School of Engraving' in the *Library of the Fine Arts* (iii. 379 &c.) speaks of him as one of the chief artists who followed that of Woollett.



style in both their departments of art. While Sandby and others, in their views of residences of the then existing generation, were recording the life of their own time present, Hearne set himself to depict the contemporary aspect of relics of the past. He travelled over England and Scotland in search of mediæval antiquities, and in 1781 had executed fifty-two drawings,<sup>1</sup> of which he made an exhibition at the rooms in Spring Gardens. At the same time, William Byrne, who like himself was a student of archæology, was, with the assistance of Samuel Middiman and one or two other skilful artists, busily engaged in engraving them on copper. The series of plates thus commenced extended over a long course of years. When complete, they were collected in two oblong folio volumes, entitled *Antiquities of Great Britain*, 'Illustrated in Views of Monasteries, Castles, and Churches, now existing, Engraved by W. Byrne, F.S.A. from Drawings made by Thomas Hearne, F.S.A. with descriptions in English and French. London, Printed for T. Cadell and W. Davies, Strand, 1807.' The size of the subjects is 10 by 7½ inches.

To the contemporary display of the talent of the two eminent draftsmen, Michael Rooker and Thomas Hearne, whose rise and professional progress has been sketched in the foregoing pages, the origin of British water-colour painting has sometimes been attributed. It would perhaps be more correct to say that in their works we see the culminating point of the old topographic school, which was to be superseded by a more complete rendering of landscape in the next generation.

In the careers of Rooker and Hearne there was much in common, as well as in the technical practice of their joint art. At the same time, there are marked points of distinction. They were very nearly of an age, Rooker having been born in 1743, and Hearne in the following year. Both began, as we have seen, as landscape engravers. Both attained to more than common skill in the use of the burin, but cast it aside in after years for the more congenial freedom of the pencil. Both adopted the 'stained' or 'tinted' manner of the topographers of their time. But their styles of art bear witness to a difference of perceptive feeling; the work of their hand seeming to accord with

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave (*Dict. of the English School*), who says they 'are dated from 1777 to 1781, the latter drawings exhibiting more artistic feeling.' The drawings in the engraved series of Byrne's *Antiquities* include others of earlier and later dates; one (of 'Castle Acre Priory') being as early as 1771, and some being as late as 1788; the dates of publication of the plates ranging from 1778 to 1806.

their personal disposition. While both were reputed men of great integrity, Rooker's manners are said to have been 'somewhat rough,'<sup>1</sup> and Hearne's 'agreeable, gentlemanly and modest.'<sup>2</sup>

Rooker's drawing is decided and vigorous. His colour, not inharmonious as a whole, is sometimes careful in textural detail; but often limited to a merely distinctive indication of general hues of certain objects, the grounding grey of others being left untinted. 'He had,' says Pyne,<sup>3</sup> 'an excellent eye for the picturesque. Many of his representations of ancient remains are drawn with truth and characteristic detail. . . The views of the colleges on the Oxford Almanack which were drawn and engraved by this artist,' adds the same critic, 'alone would remain sufficient testimony of his abilities.' His 'groups of figures' too are 'well drawn and well introduced.'<sup>4</sup> But his views suggest little beyond what they actually depict. They are devoid of poetry, and, in sense of beauty of atmospheric gradations, are far inferior to the works of his *confrère*.

To Hearne the critics have justly assigned the higher place. 'Following Sandby and Rooker, and next in succession to them,' he is held by Redgrave<sup>5</sup> to have 'greatly advanced the new art of water-colours. Though weak in colour, his truth and correctness of drawing, his tasteful finish and composition, added a new charm to the art. He used the pen, but less obtrusively than his predecessors, sometimes so tenderly in tint that, while adding greatly to the minute beauty of his architectural forms, it gives a most delicate sharpness and completion.' Pilkington<sup>6</sup> says of Hearne's works that 'though not remarkably numerous, they are eminently distinguished for some of the best qualities of the art. He seldom attempted the bolder effects of nature; but for truth, a chaste and mild tone of colouring, and an admirable judgment in the arrangement of the whole, they have seldom been surpassed; and it is not too much to say, that he was the father of all that is good in that species of art, namely, landscape in water-colours, which has so widely and conspicuously diffused itself, and is peculiar to this country.' He 'substituted for Indian ink in the shadows a fine grey tint, opposing a pleasing warm hue to it, and by a judicious employment of the two produced great harmony.'<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Edwards's *Anecdotes*, 264.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 65.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>7</sup> MS. Notes by Papworth.

<sup>2</sup> Pilkington's *Dictionary*.

<sup>4</sup> Redgrave's *Descriptive Catalogue*, 13.

<sup>6</sup> *General Dictionary of Painters*.

Graves finds that between the years 1765 and 1806 he exhibited seventy-eight works ; forty-two at the Incorporated Society of Artists, twelve at the Free Society, and twenty-four at the Royal Academy. Drawings by him were engraved in other works besides the 'Antiquities,' and in separate prints. Three of 'Watts's Seats' are from his designs. His subjects are generally ruins of Gothic architecture, but there are at the British Museum some views of Greek temples in Sicily, executed by him in conjunction with Mr. Charles Gore.

Contrasting somewhat with the artists just mentioned, but belonging to the same topographic group, and working with the same materials and method, were a set of draftsmen who more strictly represent the architectural element in the illustration of their time. Less picturesque in their choice of subjects than Rooker and Hearne, and still more prosaic than the former, they perhaps were better fitted, by a precise manner and neat manipulation, for the particular kind of work which they undertook. The most conspicuous among these were *Thomas Malton* and *John Carter*, both born in 1748, and therefore four years younger than Hearne. The former was employed to portray the modern buildings of the period, the smoothness of dressed stone, the symmetry of Italian façades. The latter made a faithful record of the features of our ancient edifices. But it was strictly from an architect's point of view. He did not seek to convey the venerable aspect of their walls as affected by time and natural decay. In his small views of cathedrals, in Indian ink slightly tinted, there is some tender sense of atmosphere. But his works scarcely come within the category of Landscape.

In 1780, John Carter began to make strictly architectural drawings for the Society of Antiquaries, and he was so employed to the end of the century. Many of these, beautifully executed, of sectional and other views of English cathedrals (some of them still unengraved), are in the possession of the society. Carter is best known by his various engraved works. He was himself a writer on Gothic Architecture. He is also said to have painted the scenery of two operas which he composed for the stage.

Thomas Malton, usually called 'the younger,' was the son of Thomas, or Thomas A. Malton,<sup>1</sup> a draftsman of the same class, born in 1726, whose age was therefore intermediate between those of the

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*. In Stanley's *Bryan* these two Maltons are combined in one personality.



two Sandbys. The father is said to have gone to Dublin in or before 1769, after failing as a London upholsterer in the Strand; and to have lived poorly by teaching perspective. In 1775 he published, as Joshua Kirby had done more than twenty years before, a *Treatise on Perspective on the Principles of Dr. Taylor*. Graves finds five works exhibited by him at the Royal Academy between 1772 and 1785, and Redgrave describes his drawings as being 'finished in Indian ink, slightly tinted,' and tells us that after living again for some time in London, he eventually died in Dublin in 1801.

Drawings by Thomas Malton the younger are found named in the exhibition catalogues from an earlier to a later date than his father's, namely from 1768 to 1803:—two at the Free Society, and 128 at the Royal Academy. He contributed five views to 'Watts's Seats;' and there is one 'View near Bath' by him in Middiman's series of landscape prints. But there is usually nothing about his works that savours of the country. He was essentially a drawer of modern streets, his education in art having been more that of a practical architect than a painter's. He was for three years in the office of Gandon, who erected some of the principal buildings in Dublin. These he made the subjects of large perspective drawings, tinted as usual upon a carefully shaded Indian ink foundation. In 1780 we find him at Bath, drawing the stately stone houses of that fashionable resort, and at a later date he came to London, where he made a vast number of views, and published them in a series of prints.<sup>1</sup> Malton also, like so many of the best draftsmen of his time, was employed as a scene-painter, and attained to some success in that branch of art at Covent Garden Theatre.

There was a third artist of the same surname, possibly another son of old Thomas Malton, known as *James Malton*. He made and published a series of *Picturesque Views of the City of Dublin* between 1791 and 1795, while the younger Thomas was illustrating in the same way the cities of London and Westminster.

Thomas Malton's streets are well peopled, and enlivened with the incidents of the daily life of his time. Within their limits, they continue the illustrative record of domestic history which Sandby had been jotting down from an earlier date. The figures are, indeed, more

<sup>1</sup> *A Picturesque Tour through the Cities of London and Westminster*, 2 vols. 8vo, 1792. He also published *Picturesque Views in the City of Oxford*, 4to, 1802. And he taught Turner perspective.



conventional than Sandby's, though both these draftsmen are said to have been assisted in this important element by the same artist, one who claims further notice on his own account, namely *Francis Wheatley*, R.A.

Wheatley, though in the main an oil-painter, practised much in water-colours also ; and, in the washed or tinted manner of his day, drew both figures and landscapes well. Many of his works are the subjects of prints, the most widely known being that of the riots of '80, engraved by James Heath. Wheatley's figures are too elegant to have much individual character. He evidently did much more for Malton than for Sandby. He was born in 1747, in London, and learnt his art there, but painted portraits for some years in Dublin, where he probably came to know the Maltons. As a painter of rustic landscape, wherein his talent chiefly lay, he must be included among a group of artists with whom the Maltons and their brother topographers had little in common.

Although *William Marlow* was another artist well known for his views of public buildings, it was chiefly as a painter in oils. He also studied in water-colours, and made drawings of Italian seaports, &c. They were chiefly dependent on outline, and were crude in colour.

## CHAPTER IV

## PICTURESQUE TOPOGRAPHY

Middiman's 'Views'—Natural scenery—Gainsborough—His influence—His love of transparency—His camera—Wheatley in landscape—Barret, R.A.—Unfairly contrasted with Wilson—His career—Sir George Beaumont's panorama.

ALTHOUGH we are approaching the time when water-colour art was to emancipate itself from its old subserviency to engraving, it will still be convenient to employ the chalcographic publications of the time as a thread whereon to string our historic notes of the draftsmen whose works they represent.

Distinguishable from the 'Virtuosi's Museum' by their superiority of execution, and both from that work and from Byrne's 'Antiquities' by the nature of their subjects, are the series of fifty-three *Select Views in Great Britain* 'engraved by S. Middiman from Pictures and Drawings by the most eminent Artists, with Descriptions,' which were published by that engraver at 3 Grafton Street, Tottenham Court Road, from 1783 till 1787. They also mark an epoch when landscape was beginning to free itself from the trammels of topography; or, to speak more correctly, when the lines along which the two arts had been separately advancing had begun to converge.

The approach on the one side had been mainly the work of Sandby, Rooker, and Hearne. That on the other was greatly, if not entirely, due to *Gainsborough*. That thoroughly English artist, though some of his landscapes may seem conventional in modern eyes, was the first to tell his countrymen of the wealth of beauty that lay wasting its sweetness in the rural lanes and woods and hedgerows of their native land. Wilson might shed a halo of southern sunshine over Welsh hills, and perch Olympian gods upon our northern cumuli. Taverners might copy Poussin, and Smiths of Derby make free with Claude. Even Gainsborough himself got something from the Dutch, and conventionalized after his own fashion. But in his pictures we have the foundation of a school of landscape which neither imports a

foreign element, nor contents itself with a mere recording of the look and shape of individual objects. It makes the sensation of abstract beauty, of form, of tone, and of colour, its leading motive in the selection, but still more in the treatment, of its subject ; while it seeks at the same time to convey as strong an impress as possible of the character of the scenery it depicts. It was only in the succeeding generation that these two principles came to be combined, in a form of topography in which local objects, though furnishing the primary motive, were subjected to an artistic treatment either poetic or merely picturesque, which, by exalting the theme, constituted in itself the work of art that charmed the spectator.<sup>1</sup>

Gainsborough himself, though he made studies in chalk and even in water-colour, was essentially a painter in oils ; and it is merely in his general influence on landscape art, as practised after his time by water-colour draftsmen, that he demands notice here. He died in 1788 at the age of sixty-one. Had he belonged to the generation that succeeded his, he must inevitably have excelled in water-colour painting. There is evidence that he had a singular appreciation of the beauty of transparent colour. Had he lived to learn the fullness and depth with which water-colours could be used, he would have hailed the discovery with special delight. During the latter years of his life he occupied himself with experiments in transparent painting, as a means of representing luminous and atmospheric effects. Angelo, in his own *Reminiscences*,<sup>2</sup> mentions Gainsborough's admiration of some transparent scenery during the carnival of Venice. The absorbing fascination exercised upon him by Loutherbourn's *Eidophusikon*, which represented nature in a similar way, is well known. It is said that he was 'so possessed with the magical richness of transparencies that he occasionally made studies, and lighting them from behind, from these emulated their splendour in his pictures,' and that 'owing to this practice some of his latest works are remarkable for violent contrasts and wanting in that stillness and harmony which characterised his earlier labours.'<sup>3</sup> Impelled, it is believed, by the charm of Loutherbourn's show, and further entranced by Jarvis's<sup>4</sup> exhibition of stained glass, he

<sup>1</sup> 'Art I define as a whole, wherein a large element of beauty clothes and makes acceptable a still larger element of truth.' (C. Coquelin on 'Acting and Actors,' *Harper's Magazine*, May 1887.) The definition applies to graphic as well as to histrionic art.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 8.

<sup>4</sup> The glass stainer who executed the west window of New College, Oxford, from Sir Joshua Reynolds's designs.



devised and constructed a small camera or peep-show of his own, in which by means of slides painted by him on glass, and lit up with candles from behind, he was enabled to depict landscapes under various conditions of light and air. In his latter years, he was in the habit of sketching designs for this show-box exhibition, while intimate friends, who called upon him in an evening stroll, sat by and sipped their tea.<sup>1</sup> At the painter's death, he left the camera to his unmarried daughter, from whom it was purchased by Dr. Monro.<sup>2</sup>

Among Middiman's views there is nothing by Gainsborough. But some of the earliest and best are from drawings or pictures by his brother Academicians *Francis Wheatley* and GEORGE BARRET. Barret was a foundation member of the Academy in 1768. Wheatley was not elected until 1791. Their views were taken, not from the haunts of men, but from parts of the country where Nature had her sway uncontrolled; nearly all from the scenery of the Lakes. When the series, originally published by Middiman, and then continued at irregular intervals by the Boydells, was finally made up at the end of 1812 to fifty-three views, the complete work was issued in one volume with an advertisement claiming for the collection the merit of 'being among the first to have created a taste for the sublime scenery of Great Britain. The Lakes and Mountains of Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Lancashire, now the general resort of the Tourist and the admiration of the Painter, were but little noticed at the time of the Publication of the early Numbers, though representations of them at present abound.' So runs the advertisement, the historic truth of which there is no reason to doubt. 'Middiman's views' mark a new departure in British landscape art. They had fairly broken the bounds of old-fashioned topography.

A classified list of the complete series of these views shows that

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ubi supra.

<sup>2</sup> Gainsborough's camera was shown in W. B. Cooke's exhibition of drawings at 9 Soho Square in 1824, with some of the views. It remained in Dr. Monro's possession until his death in 1833, after which, at the dispersal of his collection, it was sold by Christie, with ten subjects, to Mr. Benoni White, the dealer, of Brownlow Street, Holborn. By him it was bequeathed to Mr. G. W. Reid, late Keeper of Prints to the British Museum. It was for a short time, in December 1881, to be seen at Mr. Hogarth's, the dealer's, in Mount Street. It was again placed on view with twelve glass paintings, by Sir Coutts Lindsay, in his 'Grosvenor Gallery,' in the collection of Gainsborough's works in the winter of 1884-85; but, not being lighted in the manner intended by the painter, it there failed to receive due attention. One of the slide subjects was shortly afterwards etched by M. Brunet de Baines, with the name 'Worcester, a Peep between Trees.' On 29 March, 1890, it was sold at Christie's, with the twelve landscapes, for 205 guineas. It is said that at a former sale they were bought in at 1,200/.



they contained fifteen 'Mountains &c.,' fourteen 'Rural Prospects,' sixteen 'Lakes, Bays, &c.,' and eighteen 'Rivers, Cascades, &c.'

The eight views contributed by *Wheatley* give a fair sample of his quality. They at least bear out the Messrs. Redgrave's<sup>1</sup> estimate that 'his forte lay in landscape with rustic figures, treated with taste, but marked by an over-refined prettiness.'

*George Barret* was a more conspicuous artist. But he scarcely seems to hold now his true place in the history of British art, owing to comparisons habitually made, and justly so, with some of his greater contemporaries, more especially with *Wilson*. Unfortunately for *Barret*, it is in such comparisons that his name most frequently occurs in the literature of art. We are accustomed to read that while poor *Wilson* (an Academician too) was suffering in neglect, and looking to posterity alone for the fame he deserved, and while people of rank and fashion, who came to sit to *Gainsborough*, swept by, without bestowing a glance on, his row of unsold landscapes, a misdirected patronage extolled the genius of *Barret*, who made (and spent) his thousands a year by practice in that branch of art.

No one in the present day would venture to place *Barret* in the same rank, as a painter, with *Wilson* or *Gainsborough*. But his influence on the art of his time must in some degree be measured by his popularity while he lived. He is described as a man of genial disposition, playful in manner, of high spirits, and a strong turn to wit and humour. *Pyne*, who remembered him, says that he was not only 'warm-hearted and highly esteemed,' but 'an enthusiast in his art.' No doubt he was indebted for much of his position and success to the friendly offices of persons of distinction. *Edmund Burke* set him to study the scenery of *Lord Powerscourt's* park near his native *Dublin*, in which city he had been employed, as greater painters<sup>2</sup> than he were afterwards employed in *London*, in colouring prints. When *Barret* came to *London* in 1762,<sup>3</sup> *Lord Dalkeith* paid him 1,500*l.* for three pictures. In his latter days, when his health failed and he had spent even more than he had earned, *Burke* again came to his relief and obtained for him the well-paid and apparently sinecure post of Master Painter to *Greenwich Hospital*. Besides being an original member of the *Royal Academy*, he was one of the most active of its founders. No doubt he was greatly overrated. But he was the fashionable landscape painter of the day. His pictures gained premiums in *Dublin* and

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 440.

<sup>2</sup> *Turner and Girtin*.

<sup>3</sup> *Redgrave*.

in London. Graves enumerates fifty-two works by Barret in the exhibitions of the older societies and the Academy between 1764 and 1786. Even he drew gentlemen's seats. There are five such views of his in Watts's series.

A continuous view of Cumberland Lake scenery, which he painted on the walls of a large room at Norbury Park, then the residence of the Rev. John Locke, was the talk of society. According to the Messrs. Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> it was in oil, but Pyne<sup>2</sup> says it was painted in body-colours, 'or what is termed by the French, who excel in that process, *gwash*,' and accounts it 'among the best of the earliest efforts of the English school of landscape.' The latter writer further informs us that this wall decoration has been regarded as the precursor of the cylindrical pictures which were in later years so long popular under the name of 'the Panorama.' It is said that Sir George Beaumont, on the suggestion thus afforded, actually built a small circular room by way of experiment, from the centre of which the spectator's eye could sweep the complete horizon of a Welsh view painted all round him on the wall.

Barret's works are unequal, his earlier being heavier than his later manner; and some of his pictures are said to have suffered from changes in the pigments he used. His 'stained drawings' are scarcely of importance enough to entitle him to rank as one of the founders of our water-colour school; but he had an influence upon its landscape art, not only as an early painter who devoted himself to the representation of English scenery, feeling and portraying its richness and the charm of its dewy verdure at spring-tide, but by the sound training which he seems to have given to an artist of greater talent, who inherited his name and was one of the first members of the Water-Colour Society.

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 107-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 46.

## CHAPTER V

## TRAVELLING ARTISTS ; AND ALEXANDER COZENS

John Smith—William Pars—John Cleveley—John Webber—Francis Smith—William Alexander—Influence of travellers on the Water-Colour School—*Alexander Cozens*—His origin and marriage—Teaches amateurs at Bath—His method of composing landscapes—Gainsborough and amateur sketchers—Cozens's published works.

ANOTHER artist, of a name so common as to be of itself a drawback to distinction, appears as a contributor of designs for six of the earlier plates to Middiman's 'Views.' This was *John Smith*, a man destined to do more than either of the above to advance the art of water-colour painting. The last of the plates after his designs is dated 25 May, 1785. He then set off for Italy with the Earl of Warwick; and it was during the next ten years that he changed his old manner of tinting his drawings for the more effective method of using colour which was afterwards developed into the practice of the modern school. More will be said of him by-and-by. In the mean time the employment on which he was engaged demands our consideration.

While the scope of British topography had been widening, and an increasing number of draftsmen had thus found employment for their talent, a demand had arisen for artists of the same kind to undertake the like task beyond the limits of the British Isles. With the love of inquiry into times remote there had also come a thirst for knowledge of distant places. Voyages of discovery were promoted in the interests of science; and a taste for travel, combining with the *dilettante* spirit of art, had resulted in the exploring of classic sites and in continental touring by persons of wealth and leisure. The records of these various expeditions took the form of illustrated books for which the line engravers of the day reproduced many views made on the spot by draftsmen employed for the purpose.

Hence arose this wider demand for workers in water-colour. The same simple method of drawing which they had found suitable to home views, proved equally available in foreign travel. For the rapid



and permanent record of local facts there has not even yet been discovered a more handy and expressive style of sketching, than that adopted by the old topographers Sandby and Rooker; and it was employed by the travelling artists who accompanied expeditions round the world, or were taken out by noblemen on the 'grand tour' of Europe. Some of these artists played an important part in the formation of the school of landscape which afterwards became identified with the old Water-Colour Society.

*Hearne*, as we have seen, had practised his pencil abroad, when employed by the Governor of the Leeward Islands.

*William Pars*, A.R.A., known also as a portrait painter, who died at forty in 1782, drew Greek ruins for the Dilettanti Society between 1763 and 1766, some of which were aquatinted by Sandby and some engraved in line by Byrne; and he also travelled on the Continent with Lord Palmerston, and took views of Rome and among the Tyrolese and Swiss Alps, some of the latter of which were engraved by Woollett. He exhibited stained drawings at the Royal Academy, where Graves<sup>1</sup> finds twenty-seven of his works, besides thirteen at the earlier societies' galleries, between 1760 and 1800. Ten of his views were in Dr. Percy's collection, sold at Christie's on 22 April, 1890. They were treated with an elegant sense of the picturesque, and his tinted greys have an agreeable warmth of tone.

*John Cleveley*, a marine painter who learned water-colours from Paul Sandby, accompanied Mr. Banks on his tour in Iceland in 1772, and was draftsman to the voyage to the north seas undertaken in 1774 by Captain Phipps (afterwards Lord Mulgrave). He died in 1786 at about the same age as Pars.

*John Webber*, R.A., was born about seven years after Cleveley, and survived him by about the same period. He went out as draftsman with Captain Cook, illustrated that navigator's third and last voyage, and depicted as an eye-witness the scene of his death, in a print engraved by Bartolozzi and Byrne. Though weak both in drawing and colour, some views which he etched and aquatinted of the places he went to are said to have been very popular. He was made a Royal Academician but two years before his death.

*Julius Cæsar Ibbetson* accompanied Colonel Cathcart's embassy to China in 1788 as draftsman, but the ambassador dying on the voyage the vessel returned.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of Artists.*



There were other draftsmen who had been similarly employed. Among them is mentioned one *Francis Smith*, who died in or about 1779, having made drawings in the East, in company with Lord Baltimore. In succeeding generations, fresh groups of artists were engaged in the same branch of the profession. Some of these will demand more special notice in the sequel ; and although it belongs to a rather later period, the name of *William Alexander* (born 1767, died 1816), who accompanied Lord Macartney to China in 1792 as draftsman, and illustrated Sir George Staunton's account of that embassy, deserves special mention here. His figures were spirited, and his topographic and architectural subjects were drawn with refined taste.<sup>1</sup>

These draftsmen are in fact the artistic ancestry of the special correspondents of illustrated journals of our own day. Of them may be repeated what has been already said of the earlier topographers, that they are better entitled to the name of ' historical painters ' than are those (Academic, Pre-Raphaelite, or whatever else they may be) who assume it on the strength of sitting in a studio and copying paid models, dressed up to represent persons who may never even have existed at all ; and events which, after all the artist's pains in his endeavour to be realistic, had (we may be sure) a different aspect when they actually occurred. ' Les peintres soi-disant de l'histoire ne peignent pas mieux l'histoire que la fable.'<sup>2</sup>

Whether, as a rule, the artists who thus travelled in foreign countries, or accompanied expeditions to remote parts of the earth, did much to develop the art of water-colour painting, may be matter of doubt. In their persons, however, the professional importance of their class of draftsmen was raised ; and by the nature of the subjects, their works contributed to enlarge the mind, as they gave to the landscape painter a wider field of observation. But it must be remembered that the public before whom such works have to be laid (the ' gentlemen who stay at home at ease,' while *they* are braving ' the danger of the seas ') are in no position to judge of the truth of representation, or of the painter's appreciative taste. That power of his, upon the captivating strength whereof the value of his art so much depends—the power to charm the spectator by enabling him again to realize a scene by which he has himself been impressed—is of no avail in

<sup>1</sup> See account of his life and works in Redgrave's *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>2</sup> Eugène Delacroix in *Revue de Paris*, 1829.

such a case. We look with a curiosity inspired by the strangeness of the prospect or its incidents, and think less of the artistic merit of the drawing itself than we do when the scene is of a more familiar kind. Our interest resembles that of the antiquaries in the earlier days, who knew nothing of landscape as a fine art, and made no demand for pictorial quality. With home scenery the case is different, and it has accordingly been to the study of nature in the British Isles that we chiefly, or almost entirely, owe our national development of landscape, and with it of water-colour painting.

There have, however, as we shall now see, been some notable exceptions to the rule. Among the landscape draftsmen of this time who were indebted to the patronage of wealthy persons for opportunities of study in foreign parts, there were two, nearly of the same age, in whose works are recognizable a distinct advance upon the art of their contemporaries, and who, each in his own different way, exercised an important influence upon that of their immediate successors. These were *John Robert Cozens*, born in 1752; and the *John Smith* mentioned above as one of the draftsmen employed for some of the earlier plates in Middiman's views. Both went to Italy as landscape draftsmen, but Cozens's visits to that country ended some years before Smith's began. The name of 'Italian' Smith is associated chiefly with the technical improvement of water-colour art. That of Cozens is imperishably connected with its advance towards a higher aim and the development of its æsthetic quality. John Robert Cozens, more familiarly known as 'John Cozens' simply, came of artistic parentage on both sides. Little is known directly of his youth; but he must have lived in an atmosphere of art, such as it was. His father, Alexander Cozens, was a fashionable teacher of drawing, who had among his pupils the Prince of Wales and other persons of rank, was professor of the art at Eton College from 1763 to 1768, and for a time resided at Bath, where he adopted a system of instruction which gained him great popularity among amateurs.

A rumour, or more than a rumour, of Imperial descent, may have shed a halo of interest in society over the person of ALEXANDER COZENS. By birth a Russian, he is said to have been a natural son of Peter the Great by an English woman whom he took from Deptford. As Peter was working in the dockyard there in 1697, it has been conjectured<sup>1</sup> that

<sup>1</sup> See the *Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue* of Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings, 1871.

Alexander Cozens was born about 1698, a date scarcely, however, in accordance with those assigned to the active period of his life and the publication of his writings. They seem to imply a later time of birth. We are told, moreover,<sup>1</sup> that the Czar had, by the same mother, another son, who became a general in the Russian service. Alexander may have been a younger brother. The Emperor sent him to Italy to study painting, whence he came from Rome to England, in 1746, the year in which Tom Sandby sketched the field of Culloden, while Paul was drawing fortifications at the Tower.

Here Cozens married a wife, who, in 1752, gave birth to his more eminent son. Biographers' accounts of Mrs. Cozens and her family are in some confusion. Edwards<sup>2</sup> calls her a sister of Robert Edge Pine, portrait and history painter; but Redgrave<sup>3</sup> says she was his daughter. As, according to the last-named authority, this Robert Edge Pine was only ten years old at the date of John Cozens's birth, this could scarcely be; and we are left to suppose that she was the sister. If so, she must have been another and an older child of John Pine, engraver, who, according to the same writer, was Hogarth's convivial friend 'Friar Pine,' the original of the fat ecclesiastic in the great humourist's picture of 'Calais Gate.' But even here historians differ. In the roll of British artists there are Pines and Pynes, between whom it is not easy to make due distinction. One of a later date, the W. H. Pyne before quoted, whom we shall have presently to deal with as one of the immediate founders of the Water-Colour Society, tells us<sup>4</sup> that it was Robert Edge Pine himself who was so painted by Hogarth and dubbed 'Friar' by his jolly companions. The probability is that the engraver sat to Hogarth; and that it was his daughter, the painter's sister, who became the drawing-master's wife.

However that may be, Alexander Cozens taught drawing to the fashionable circles at Bath in the gay old times when there were 'congregated there from all quarters of the globe not only the invalid to gain health from the thermal springs, but the idle, the dissipated, and also the lovers of the arts.'<sup>5</sup>

It was in 1771 that Sheridan, then a young man of twenty, went with his father's family to reside at Bath. In the same year the new Assembly Rooms were opened; and Smollett published *Humphrey*

<sup>1</sup> Leslie's *Handbook for Young Painters*.

<sup>2</sup> *Anecdotes*.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>4</sup> *Wine and Walnuts*, i. 116 n.

<sup>5</sup> *Life of Sheridan*, prefixed to Bohn's edition of his Dramatic Works.



*Clinker*.<sup>1</sup> In the same year also Robert Edge Pine came to Bath to paint portraits, having left London in a fit of ill temper against the President of the Spring Gardens Society of Artists. He practised at Bath till 1779, and we may fairly conjecture that it was during the same period that his brother-in-law was engaged in giving lessons to the Lydia Languishes and Julias of the day in the new and fascinating amusement of landscape composition.

Alexander Cozens has been styled (as have several other artists) the 'father' of our water-colour school. It would be more accurate to call him the father of its schoolmasters. He seems to have been the first who professed to conduct amateurs along a royal road to the production of pretty pictures, without imposing upon them the hard study and careful observation of nature necessary to a thorough practitioner in art. Dayes, in his *Professional Sketches*, calls him 'Blotmaster-general to the town.' Certainly, his method of teaching was peculiar, and savoured somewhat of mechanical trick. Yet it may be fairly contended that such a method has more within it of the elements of thoughtful art, than the mere setting up before a student of objects to copy. Cozens's appears to have been suggested by some observations of Leonardo da Vinci's, on a saying attributed to Botticelli, that a palette full of colours being thrown against a wall would leave a stain behind it properly enough representing a landscape. 'It is true indeed,' says Leonardo, 'that by the help of a strong fancy one may spy heads, battles, rocks, seas, clouds, woods, &c., in a wall so smeared; it being here as in the ringing of bells, where everybody is at liberty to make them say what he pleases; but then, though a fortuitous mixture of colours may start a hint, or give rise to a new invention, yet it will not furnish the least assistance towards the execution or finishing anything it has occasioned.' Having thus guarded himself against the charge of advocating such a method of inspiration as a substitute for invention, the great Florentine himself recommends a very similar course in the following words:—

'Among other things I shall not scruple to deliver a new method of assisting the invention, which, though trifling in appearance, may yet be of considerable service in opening the mind and putting it

<sup>1</sup> Anstey's *New Bath Guide*, upon which Smollett's account of Bath is greatly founded, was published in 1766. Sheridan's *Rivals* was first acted in 1775, and Miss Burney's *Evelina* came out in 1778.

upon the scent of new thoughts ; and 'tis this. If you look at some old wall covered with dirt, or the odd appearance of some streaked stones, you may discover several things like landscapes, battles, clouds, uncommon attitudes, humourous faces, draperies, &c. Out of this confused mass of objects the mind will be furnished with abundance of designs and subjects perfectly new.'

Cozens's process, according to Edwards,<sup>1</sup> was 'to dash out upon several pieces of paper a number of accidental large blots and loose flourishes, from which he selected forms, and sometimes produced very grand ideas ; but,' adds the same writer, 'they were in general too indefinite in their execution and unpleasing in their colour, for being wrought in dark brown or bister they appeared sombre and heavy in the extreme, similar in their effect to the appearance of nature when viewed through a dark-coloured lens.' Cozens demonstrated this process in a small published tract, entitled *A New Method of Drawing Original Landscapes*. It is obvious that the value of such a method lies in its application. The artistic eye looks upon all things with reference to their combinations and proportions of form, quantity and colour, and these it recognizes in an old wall as well as in a landscape or other scene. The inartistic eye sees them in neither, and cannot perceive the analogy, or just applicability of the one to the other. To the mind of Alexander Cozens his method may have been admirably suggestive of effects of light ; as one educated under more modern influences will see in a card smoked over a candle the most delicate gradations of a Turneresque *chiaroscuro*.

Pyne, commenting, in his outspoken way, upon certain tricky methods of teaching, which in his own later time had exercised a baneful influence on water-colour art, denounces, in unmeasured terms, this haphazard method of composing landscapes. In the *Rise and Progress of Water-Colour Painting in England*, the elder Cozens claims that writer's notice, only for having, at Bath, 'too successfully practised upon the credulity of the amateurs of style, who frequented that fashionable resort of wealthy listlessness. Will it,' he asks, 'be believed hereafter that a professor of painting should undertake to splash the surface of a china plate with yellow, red, blue, and black, and taking impressions from the promiscuous mass, on prepared paper, affect to teach his disciples and those persons of education and elegant minds to work them into landscape compositions? This,

<sup>1</sup> *Anecdotes of Painting*, 119.

however, he attempted, and the charlatanery succeeded, for he had a host of scholars for several seasons, who rewarded him most munificently for his wonderful discovery!'<sup>1</sup>

If the first parentage of our water-colour school be too high an honour to attribute to Alexander Cozens, it is not necessary thus to cast upon him the imputation of degrading its practice. He, like the draftsmen who preceded him, was in a great degree a product of his time. His teaching was supplied in answer to a rising demand which he had not been the first to create. The kind of practical dilettantism which the elder Cozens employed his talent in fostering, was to exercise in the coming age a strong influence on the development and application of water-colour art.

If, however, the love of landscape-sketching, which has long distinguished English amateurs, and in our own day remains as prevalent as ever, is to be traced to the influence of one individual, that one is more probably *Gainsborough*. He had resided at Bath for fourteen years, at the end of which period he went to settle in London, in 1774, at about the time when the career of Cozens began at the former fashionable resort. Although Gainsborough's large landscapes had but a poor sale in London, his rural scraps and picturesque fragments, executed slightly, but with telling effect, and apparent ease, presented models which fired the amateur with a natural desire to imitate, and a hope of catching their attractive manner. 'That inimitable painter,' says Pyne, 'unwittingly set the fashionable world agog after style; but he did not enter the lists as a teacher, nor would he have allowed youth who had advised with him upon art to waste their time in attempting to learn what no one could teach. The copyists, or rather dabblers in his new style, were full-grown amateurs, polite idlers at Bath, who vainly fancied, forsooth, because this rare genius could, by a sort of graphic magic, dash off romantic scraps of landscape, rural hovels, wild heaths, and picturesque groups of rustics, that they had but to procure his brown or blue paper, and his brushes and pigments, and do the like. . . . The Gainsborough mania,' adds Pyne, 'was long the rage; and there are yet' (he is writing in December 1823) 'some antique beaux and belles of *haut ton*, who recollect their many friends who, with themselves, were stricken with this sketching phrenzy, and smile at Bath and its vanities, as they talk of the days that are gone.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 162.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*



It was in the field so well prepared for him by Gainsborough that Alexander Cozens trod his path of successful tuition. Leslie says that he taught the figure as well as landscape. He was also a theoretical writer on art, and besides the tract above mentioned, published the following works: *Treatise on Perspective, and Rules for Shading by Invention*, 1765; *The various Species of Composition in Nature*; 'with observations, &c.' containing sixteen subjects in four plates; *The Shape, Skeleton, and Foliage of Thirty-two Species of Trees*, 'for the use of Painting and Drawing,' 1771 (another edition, 1786); and *The Principles of Beauty, relative to the Human Head*, folio, 1778. This last is a curious essay, being an attempt to build up expressions in female profiles, by piecing together sets of features, selected according to prescribed receipts from a store of single examples previously assorted and indexed. It mainly consists of a series of nineteen outline plates engraved in life-size by F. Bartolozzi; two being devoted to the separate eyes, noses, &c., and seventeen to their combinations in faces representing distinct types of beauty, such as the Majestic, the Sensible, the Tender, the Artful, &c. &c. Transparent removable headdresses are added, designed to serve up each face in varied fashion. The titles and explanatory text are given in English and French. Nearly all the plates are dated April 1777. The book must have been talked of for more than one season, as Banks the sculptor exhibited, at the Royal Academy in 1783, a 'Head—on Cozens's principles.'

Alexander Cozens does not appear to have resided entirely at Bath. His address, given in the Royal Academy Catalogue for 1772, is 'Leicester Street, Leicester Fields;' and there he is said to have died, in April 1786.

## CHAPTER VI

## JOHN COZENS AND JOHN SMITH

*John Cozens*—Teaches by example—Early drawings—His ‘Hannibal’—Influence on Turner—Visit to Italy with Payne Knight—Buys his father’s lost sketches—Second visit with Beckford—Loss of reason—Kindness of Sir G. Beaumont and Dr. Monro—Date of death—Character of his art—‘*Warwick*’ *Smith*—His views of Italy—New process of painting—Engraved works.

THE more important and lasting, though less direct, influence of this drawing-master’s greater son, JOHN COZENS, upon landscape art, was of an altogether different nature from his. The younger Cozens appears to have been abroad when his parent was giving lessons in Bath, and is not known to have been himself engaged in tuition. He taught by example, not by precept. The works which he left behind him bespeak his mind as an artist, and simple and elementary as they are in a technical point of view, have never failed to impress the true connoisseur with a sense of their poetic feeling.

Little is known of the facts of his life, except what is sufficiently apparent in his drawings, that he received his inspiration of natural beauty in the tender repose of Italian air. Leslie mentions a very small pen-drawing of three figures inscribed with the words, ‘Done by J. Cozens 1761, when nine years old.’ He must, if this statement be true, have been fifteen when he exhibited ‘a drawing of a landscape’ at Spring Gardens in 1767. One or more landscapes, of which the particular subjects are not mentioned, are attributed to him in the catalogues there every year between 1767 and 1771. Then comes an interval; after which, when he was twenty-five, a picture by him, said to have been in oil, appeared at the Royal Academy Exhibition of 1776, of ‘A landscape with Hannibal in his March over the Alps, showing to his army the fertile plains of Italy.’ It might now have a second title referring to the history of peaceful art, for in it the artist was himself unfolding to his professional brethren the charms of Italian landscape. The great Turner, to whom, above all other

painters, was transmitted the inspiration of Cozens, is said to have spoken of this work as one 'from which he learned more than from anything he had then<sup>1</sup> seen.'

The picture must have been painted during his first visit to Italy, which took place in the same year, 1776, in company with R. Payne Knight. A set of fifty-seven grey drawings, formerly in the Townley collection, afterwards in that of the late Hon. Rowland Allanson Winn,<sup>2</sup> and now more or less dispersed, which were a result of this visit, evince the artist's delicate perception of atmospheric effect, his sense of beauty, and masterly grasp of a subject, with the simplest means of expression.

A very few of these sketches are from the North of Italy. And further evidence exists that Cozens was in Florence in 1776. For there are at the British Museum a series of views, in Rome, and elsewhere in Italy, by the elder Cozens, accompanied by the following (unsigned) memorandum: 'Alexander Cozens, in London, Author of these Drawings, lost them and many more in Germany, by their dropping from his Saddle when he was riding on his way from Rome to England, in the year 1746. John Cozens his son being at Florence in the year 1776, purchased them. When he arrived at London in the year 1779 he delivered the drawings to his Father.'<sup>3</sup>

Edwards tells us that Cozens visited Italy twice. His second journey thither may have been due to his father's position at Bath. It was made in company with, and under patronage of, the accomplished and eccentric *millionnaire* William Beckford, author of *Vathek*, and owner and rebuilder of Fonthill Abbey. It is not to be inferred that Beckford discovered this artist's genius, or even aided in bringing

<sup>1</sup> So says Leslie in his *Life of Constable*. The word 'then' must refer to the time when Turner saw the work, and is therefore indefinite. When the picture was exhibited, Turner could not have seen much in the way of art. He was one year old.

<sup>2</sup> When the volume containing them came into Mr. Winn's possession, it was inscribed 'Views in Swisserland, a present from Mr. R. P. Knight, and taken by the late Mr. Cozens under his inspection during a Tour in Swisserland in 1776.' Dr. Percy, however, makes the following note in his catalogue, respecting this volume: 'Bought at R. P. Knight's sale by Molteno, who sold them to Rowland Winn, Esq., the present possessor, 1870.'

<sup>3</sup> One of these drawings is signed 'A. C. Roma 1746.' They are mostly in grey, executed with pen and brush, rather niggled in the pen-work, with some attempt at light and shade effect, and, generally, the conventional dark foreground. Some drawings with the pen only are in the manner of line engravings. One view has some crude colour with bright blue-greens. Leslie sees in them 'much of elegance and feeling of the beautiful forms of nature.' (*Handbook for Young Painters*.)



it to maturity, though he may have contributed to the sentiment of his art. When Cozens painted his 'Hannibal,' the late alderman's son was a lively lad of seventeen; and his patronage of art, though not inconsistent with the appreciation of poetic style in painting, which the imagination he afterwards displayed would lead one to expect, was at this time chiefly of a negative character. He was exercising his literary talent upon a ludicrous burlesque history of the Dutch painters, and in mystifying his mother's housekeeper, and the strangers who came to see the treasures of the Fonthill gallery, by furnishing her with wondrous accounts of the pictures there, painted by the distinguished old masters, Sucrewasser of Vienna, Watersouchy of Amsterdam, and Og of Basan. It was not until the spring of 1782 that young Beckford, then of age, and master of his immense fortune, set off for his second tour on the Continent, taking with him a considerable retinue—his old tutor, a doctor, a musician, and Cozens, as the professional artist, without whom the suite of a wealthy *dilettante* on his travels was now scarcely to be regarded as complete.

Since writing his *Vies de Peintres Flamands*, the young Cræsus had seen more of the world. He had spent a year and a half at Geneva, had travelled about in England, and, early in 1780, had set out with his tutor, Dr. Lettice, on what was called 'the grand tour.' As he traversed the Low Countries, Germany, and Italy, his early attachment to nature had become more and more developed,<sup>1</sup> and the romantic scenes through which he passed had impressed themselves upon him in a manner which his subsequent descriptions of them show to have been well in accord with the sentiment embodied in the works of Cozens. Here is a verbal picture of a scene in the Tyrol which might either have suggested, or been suggested by, one of that painter's drawings: 'Big drops hung on every spray, and glittered on the leaves, partially gilt by the rays of the declining sun, whose mellow hues softened the rugged summits, and diffused a repose, a divine calm, over this deep retirement, which inclined me to imagine it the extremity of the earth—the portal of some other region of existence—some happy world beyond the dark groves of pine, the caves and awful mountains, where the river takes its source!' <sup>2</sup>

It was through this Tyrol country that the party in three carriages,

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Beckford*, 2 vols. 8vo, 1859: vol. i. p. 168.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 169, quoted.

with led horses and outriders, entered Italy. On the way Beckford 'ran on foot into the woods, admiring the delicate foliage on all sides, while the artist Cozens drew the huts that were scattered about the landscape.'<sup>1</sup> They drove rapidly to Venice, were ten days at Padua, and then went to Rome. Here again the sombre scenes in which he sought relief from pageantry that he little cared for, are just what would have taken captive the heart of Cozens. They reached Naples in July, and returned to England in the latter part of the year. In 1804, the year of the founding of our Society, ninety-four of the Roman drawings made for Beckford by Cozens were sold at Christie's for 504*l.*, one of them alone fetching, it is said, fifty guineas. A view of Rome ( $18\frac{1}{2} \times 29$  in.) by him has in recent times been twice sold at Christie's (1875, 1880) for 84*l.*<sup>2</sup>

Cozens's end was a very sad one. In 1794 he lost his reason. Leslie<sup>3</sup> considers that there is evidence of a failing mind in some of his works, wherein 'that pensive sadness which forms the charm of his evening scenes sinks into cheerless melancholy.' The following note is made by Dr. Percy in his manuscript catalogue, now at the British Museum, on Cozens's drawings: 'Did Cozens in his last years, owing to increasing melancholy, use *colour* less and less? This, so far as I know at present, seems to me probable. It is a point for special inquiry.—J. P. June 19, 1881.'

In the days of his mental affliction, poor Cozens was befriended by two generous patrons of art; namely, Sir George Beaumont, and one whose name is more conspicuous in the history of our water-colour school, good Dr. Thomas Monro. What the latter did for the art itself will shortly be related. It was as a physician, skilled in like cases, that he was able to perform his kind service to this afflicted artist. Edwards relates that, receiving little or no gratuity, he treated him with the greatest care and tenderness till his death, which is said to have been in 1799.<sup>4</sup>

Cozens's works belong, technically speaking, to the old class of 'stained drawings.' Depending, however, for their effect, more on

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Beckford*, i. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Redford's *Art Sales*. The total amount is elsewhere stated at 510*l.*

<sup>3</sup> *Handbook of Painters*.

<sup>4</sup> This date is adopted by Bryan and Redgrave. Dayes and Constable make it three years earlier; and a doubt is thrown on both statements by the existence of a drawing lately in the collection of Dr. Percy, of Castel Gandolfo, pronounced by connoisseurs to be the work of Cozens, but executed on paper bearing the date 1801.

masses and gradation of light and shade than on line and form, they are more aptly described by Edwards as 'tinted chiaroscuro.' The brush did much more to them than the pen. The Messrs. Redgrave, indeed attribute to him the first move in the right direction in the use of his pigments for the suggestion of true colour ; and further, an acquaintance with 'the use of gentle washings, and abrasion of the surface to give atmosphere and distance, or to indicate sun rays through intercepting clouds,' as well as a mastership of light and shade, and the use of 'accident' in painting.<sup>1</sup>

The highest tribute of admiration to the genius of Cozens has been paid by the landscape painter John Constable, and by that artist's biographer, Leslie. The former, in hyperbole, once went so far as to call him 'the greatest genius that ever touched landscape.' He speaks of his drawings as 'keeping him cheerful.' 'Cozens,' says he, 'is all poetry.' 'But,' adds Leslie, 'it is poetry that wins gently and imperceptibly. So modest and unobtrusive are the beauties of his drawings, that you might pass them without a notice ; for the painter himself never says, "Look at this or that ;" he trusts implicitly to your own taste and feeling, and his works are full of half-concealed beauties such as Nature herself shows but coyly, and these are often the most fleeting appearances of light. Not that his style is without emphasis, for then it would be insipid, which it never is, nor ever in the least commonplace. This exquisite artist had an eye equally adapted to the grandeur, the elegance, and the simplicity of Nature ; but he loved best, not her most gorgeous language, but her gentlest, her most silent eloquence.'<sup>2</sup>

Although Cozens's drawings are for the most part studies of real places and scenes in nature, their motive is something very different from that of the pure topographer. There exist careful drawings of architecture by him,<sup>3</sup> finished with precise elaboration, which entitle him to a place in that category. But the works on which his fame rests have another origin. They are based on the general principles of beauty, not on the attractions of local, or historic, or human interest.

That the palette of John Cozens was very limited, was a matter of necessity in his day, common to all who practised in water-colours.

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 379.

<sup>2</sup> Leslie's *Handbook for Young Painters*.

<sup>3</sup> For example, the view of Rome, with St. Peter's and the Castle of St. Angelo, above mentioned.



Although a great improvement in the manufacture of colours had already begun, Redgrave tells us that in about 1783 he 'could only procure for his tinted works Indian red, lake, indigo, yellow ochre, burnt sienna with black—simple materials indeed, and very inferior, doubtless, in their preparation to those at the command of the water-colour artists of our day.'<sup>1</sup> That very grand and impressive effects can be produced with this restricted palette has been amply proved in the works of some of our old water-colour painters; the more so probably by the necessity imposed upon them of relying more upon the resources of a fine chiaroscuro for their power over the mind, than a painter is required to do when he has at command all the sensuous attraction of gay and florid colour of every variety of hue. Cozens, indeed, did not seek to attract by the use of many or bright pigments. It is, almost alone, by simple quantities and subtle gradations of light and shade, that he succeeds in stirring the soul. It is rather surprising, therefore, that so few of his drawings have been engraved. There were in his day admirable engravers in line, as well as scrapers of mezzotint, to whom they might have been expected to prove attractive. How well they lend themselves to the former mode of reproduction is shown by a small plate of the *Acrocorinthos*, engraved by John Landseer, in vol. iii. of Stuart's *Athens*, ch. vi., Pl. IV.; and to the latter by an example in Leslie's *Handbook for Young Painters*. Cozens did not himself draw much, if at all, for the press. It is probable that his works were little known in his lifetime, and that the fine quality of his art was not much appreciated beyond a narrow circle of connoisseurs.

The inspiration which JOHN SMITH derived from Italian scenery was different in its nature from that of John Cozens. He had prepared his mind by studying the works of Claude and Poussin, and it was with a taste so cultivated that he made his acquaintance with the original scenes. He 'attempted to unite depth and richness of colour with the clearness and aerial effect of Cozens.'<sup>2</sup>

The two artists have here been named together chiefly because they afford examples of the direct kind of patronage bestowed upon graphic art during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Smith was taken to Italy by the same Earl of Warwick who has already been mentioned as a patron of Paul Sandby's. That nobleman had himself

<sup>1</sup> *Catalogue of Water-Colour Paintings in South Kensington Museum*, 1877, p. 17.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Notes by J. W. Papworth.

early in life cultivated a natural taste for drawing and 'acquired a rapid and masterly style of sketching landscape. His fancy in designing rocks and waterfalls, and that species of romantic scenery which abounds in the mountainous parts of Switzerland and Italy,' says Pyne, 'was so prolific, that many subjects could have been selected from his numerous portfolios which might, in the hands of an able artist, have been wrought into magnificent pictures.'<sup>1</sup> From this companionship our artist acquired the nicknames by which he is familiarly known, of 'Italian' or 'Warwick' Smith.

He was three years older than Cozens, but long survived him, and lived not only to see the culminating period of the water-colour school, but to be far surpassed by later contemporaries.

The technical change in practice which he introduced did not take place until the career of Cozens had virtually ended. In May 1785, when Middiman published his last plate after Smith, both the above draftsmen were using the old tinted grey manner of drawing from which Cozens never emerged. In the following year, Smith began his Italian drawings, and in the later of these, among dates ranging from 1786 to 1795, are found a free use of local colour and a partial abandonment of the preliminary grey ground.

It is not quite clear when he commenced the simple and harmonious method of painting which John Landseer thus describes in his *Review of Publications of Fine Art*, published in 1808:— 'Mr. John Smith,' he says, 'first discovered and taught the junior artists the rationale of tempering their positive colours with the neutral grey formed by the mixture of red, blue and yellow: that this grey, constituted of all the primary colours, would harmonize with any, and form a common bond of concord with all, and that, tempered with a little more or less of warm or cool colours, as time, or climate, or season might require, it became the air tint, or negative colour of the atmosphere which intervened between the eye and the several objects of the landscape.'

In part in the British and in part at the South Kensington Museum, are a series of drawings, chiefly of Italian subjects, by 'Warwick' Smith, presented to the nation by Sir Walter C. Trevelyan, Bart., which exemplify the tender harmony and agreeable warmth of Smith's colouring, and contrast with the coldness of the earlier school.

John Smith was born at Irthington, Cumberland, on the 26th of

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 30.

July, 1749, and educated at St. Bees. Some of his early drawings, engraved in Middiman's series, are of his own north country. He published two quarto volumes in 1792-96 entitled *Select Views in Italy*, containing seventy-two plates engraved by Byrne, with topographical and historical descriptions in English and French. *A Tour through Parts of Wales*, 'Sonnets, Odes, and other Poems by W. Sotheby, with engravings from drawings taken on the spot by J. Smith,' 4to, 1794, contains thirteen plates ( $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  in.) in aquatint by S. Alken, printed on a rather dark-toned paper. Some of these have a fine feeling almost suggestive of Cozens. *Views of the Lakes* by him were aquatinted by Samuel Alken, and published by W. Clarke in New Bond Street in 1795. John Smith is named as one of the draftsmen for Byrne's *Britannia Depicta*, the first part of which was published in 1806, but he only contributed five views, viz.: Two of 'Windsor,' the 'Vale of Aylesbury,' and 'Buckingham' (the plates dated 1 Jan. 1803, and engraved by Wm. Byrne); and one of 'Beeston Castle' (24 Jan. 1810, by J. Byrne). In '*A Tour to Hafod* in Cardiganshire, the seat of Thomas Johnes, Esq., M.P., F.R.S., &c. folio, 1810, there are some very large coloured aquatint plates by Stadler after J. Smith's drawings 'taken many years ago.'



## CHAPTER VII

## TEACHERS, DRAFTSMEN AND DILETTANTI

Drawing masters — Sandby — *Gresse* — *Laporte* — *Payne* — His 'style' — Water-colours a fashionable amusement — Society of Arts premiums — Artists' materials improve — More topographical series — S. Ireland — Walker's 'Copper Plate Magazine' — *Dayes* — Other draftsmen employed — Patrons and collectors — Dr. Mead — Duke of Richmond — *Dr. Monro* — His drawing class.

WHILE landscape draftsmen were thus being enabled by wealthy persons to extend their experience and cultivate their art in foreign cliimes, those who stayed at home were deriving a different kind of encouragement from the same class of benefactors. The admiration which had been attracted by the water-colour artists was testified by the sincerest kind of flattery, that of imitation. An emulative influence prevailed in London circles like that with which Gainsborough's rural sketches had erst inspired the amateurs of Bath; and, as Alexander Cozens had prospered there, so a race of teachers sprang up who pursued their calling in the metropolis.

Most prosperous and influential among the drawing-masters of the day was our old acquaintance *Paul Sandby*, during probably a great part of his long life. The youthful drawings made by our great-grandmothers, that still repose, cold and grey, in well-moulded black frames, on bedroom walls in old-fashioned red-brick houses in the country, bear unmistakable marks of being modelled after the example of Sandby's once popular style.

Another very fashionable teacher of the day was JOHN ALEXANDER GRESSE, an artist of Genevese parentage. His name survives in that of a neat little back street lying between Rathbone Place and Tottenham Court Road, where his father had property, which he inherited. It was in his time, and long after, a neighbourhood much occupied by artists. 'Jack Grease,' as he was vulgarly called, in punning recognition of his foreign name and corpulent figure, enjoyed Court patronage, was teacher to the princesses in 1777, and is said to have amused the King at the same time with gossiping talk. His

manner of drawing, quite the ideal of the old method of tinting on a grey basis, is admirably shown in an example at the South Kensington Museum, an unfinished view of 'Llangollen Bridge,' in which the artist has been interrupted in his work at a point which enables us to see at a glance his course of proceeding. The result of an education and previous practice as an engraver is apparent in the extreme neatness of the preliminary outline. He had had instruction from the engravers Scotin and Major and from the landscape painter Zuccarelli, had worked for Cipriani, and was an exhibitor of drawings and miniatures at the Incorporated Society's. On his death, at the age of fifty-two, in 1794, a collection which he had formed was dispersed in a six days' sale.<sup>1</sup> Gresse's careful exactness of manner was transmitted to, and can be recognized in the work of his pupil Robert Hills, one of the actual founders of the Water-Colour Society.

JOHN LAPORTE was a much younger man than Gresse, but contemporary with him as a teacher of water-colours. Besides being employed in private practice, he became one of the masters at Addiscombe military college. 'He painted landscapes,' says Redgrave,<sup>2</sup> 'introducing cattle with effects of sunset and morning, rain and showers, and some views of Lake scenery.' He lived from 1761 to 1839. Among his pupils were Dr. Thomas Monro, the great benefactor to water-colour art, already mentioned in connection with poor Cozens.

Among the artists employed by Middiman we come upon another, whose work for the engraver was, or afterwards became, quite subordinate to his drawings made for their own sake, and whose talent was also called into great requisition by the amateur artists. WILLIAM PAYNE, whose name is attached to four subjects in Devon and Cornwall, dated March 1788 and January 1789 in the series of plates above referred to, was in fact one of the leading draftsmen of his day, and one of the first who 'abandoned mere topography for a more poetical treatment of landscape scenery.'<sup>3</sup> It is not known how old he was when in 1790 he left his native Devonshire, a county prolific of painters, where he had lived in the neighbourhood of the above subjects, namely at Plymouth Dock, now called Devonport,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>3</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 383.

<sup>4</sup> Ruskin states that, when Samuel Prout was a boy at Plymouth, 'the art of drawing was little understood' there, 'and practised only by Payne, then an engineer in the citadel.' (*Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849.)

and came to try his fortune in London, taking up his residence in Thornhaugh Street, Bedford Square. His drawings seem already to have attracted attention. He had begun to exhibit with the Incorporated Society as long before as 1776, and since 1786 had sent Devonshire views to Somerset House. The President of the Academy praised his drawings, particularly some views of slate quarries at Sir Joshua's own native place, Plympton.

Pyne relates that his small works, 'brilliant in effect and executed with spirit,' were 'regarded as striking novelties in style,' and 'no sooner seen than admired.' Yet, after the date of his arrival in London, he ceased to be an exhibitor at the Royal Academy. His professional career was henceforth to be directed by a different kind of patronage to that of the buyers of his water-colour drawings. His 'style' had taken. The young ladies of society desired to add so fascinating a form of drawing to the list of their accomplishments, and 'almost every family of fashion' was anxious that its sons and daughters should have the benefit of his tuition. Payne appears to have been the very man to satisfy this demand. He had effected a real advance in water-colour art, better adapting it to the imitation of the natural scenery, and the effects of sunshine and of cloud, which it was now called upon to represent; and, besides this, he had reduced his practice to a system which could easily be imparted to others. The simple old method of staining and tinting must have been thoroughly well known by this time, and in matters of technique there was nothing new to be got out of Sandby and Gresse. But Payne was the possessor of what was called a 'style,'<sup>1</sup> the power of reproducing which in one's own drawings could be secured at the price of a certain number of lessons. He thus proved himself equal to the occasion, and hence 'for a long period, in the noble mansions of St. James's Square, and Grosvenor Square, and York Place, and Portland Place, might be seen elegant groups of youthful amateurs manufacturing landscapes *à la Payne*.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The term 'style,' used 'in the phraseology of fashion' (i.e. in its lower sense of a special process or manner which can be taught and imitated, as distinguished from its higher signification, implying a certain dignified refinement that is above the reach of the mechanical copyist), 'originated,' according to Pyne, 'with the drawings of Mr. Payne.' See *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 162. Four 'Books, *Landscapes from Drawings by Payne*, engraved by Bluck,' are advertised at the end of *A Treatise on Ackermann's Water-Colours*, &c. (1801).



The following account of his course of proceeding is given by the Messrs. Redgrave :—<sup>1</sup>

‘He abandoned the use of outline with the pen. His general process was very simple. Having invented a grey tint (still known by the colourmen as Payne’s grey), he used it for all the varied gradations of his middle distance, treating the extreme distance, as also the clouds and sky, with blue. For the shadow in his foreground he used Indian ink or lamp-black, breaking these colours into the distance by the admixture of grey. In this he but slightly differed from the artists of his time; but his methods of handling were more peculiarly his own. These consisted of splitting the brush to give the forms of foliage, dragging the tints to give texture to his foregrounds, and taking out the forms of lights by wetting the surface and rubbing with bread and rag. . . . Having thus prepared a vigorous light and shadow, Payne tinted his distance, middle distance, and foreground with colour, retouching and deepening the shadows in front to give power to his work, and even loading his colour and using gum plentifully. He sought to enrich scenes wherein he had attempted effects of sunset or sunrise, by passing a full wash of gamboge and lake over the completed drawing.’

Pyne says this ‘process certainly was captivating, as exhibited in his happiest works, though much of their merit was the result of dexterity and trick, as exemplified by the granulated texture obtained by *dragging*, the fallacy of which process was sufficiently exposed in every attempt at composition on a larger scale in the same style.’<sup>2</sup> That writer condemns Payne’s teaching as the commencement of a period when ‘established principles’ were superseded by ‘the more fascinating properties of dashing colouring and effect. The method of instruction,’ he says, ‘in the art of drawing landscape compositions had never been reduced so completely to the degenerate notions of this epoch of bad taste as by this ingenious artist.’<sup>2</sup> The remark made above on Alexander Cozens’s haphazard method of making landscapes is equally true of Payne’s regulated course of technical procedure. Its value depends on its artistic application. He may have enabled many of his pupils to record for themselves the beautiful appearances of nature, and some amateurs may have had observance and taste enough to profit by the possession. But there were doubtless

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 382–3.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 162.

more who took the means for the end, and, instead of going to nature, were content to copy the works of their teacher.

Whatever may be thought of the nature of their various nostrums, this congregation of doctors implied the existence of something like an epidemic of water-colour painting that had already become prevalent among amateurs. Some of the symptoms of the disease when at its highest are humorously described in the following skit, which appeared in or about the year 1787: "What a fine, clear morning! I will do my sky. Betty! tell your mistress, if anyone calls, I can't be seen—I'm skying. Betty! Betty! bring me up a pan of water, and wash that sponge: it really is so hot, I cannot lay my colour smooth. Where's the flat brush? Oh dear! that Prussian blue is all curdled." "Please, pa, ma says, will you take any refreshment?" "Get away! get away! how ever can your ma think about refreshment, when she knows I'm doing my sky? There, you've knocked down my swan's quill, and how am I to soften th<sup>is</sup> colour? It will all be dry before you wash out the dirt. Give me that brush. Oh, it is full of indigo! There is the horizon spoilt! Quick! quick! some water! Oh, that's gall! And the sky is flying away! Why did your mother send you here? She might have known that I was skying."<sup>1</sup>

The attention which was being paid in high circles to the practice of drawing by amateurs, as well as the influence attributed thereto upon art itself, may be inferred from a list of 'Premiums for Promoting the Polite Arts,' offered by the Society of Arts in 1790. Among 'Honorary Premiums for Drawings' there are a gold and a silver medal 'for the best drawing by sons or grandsons,' and the like for 'daughters or granddaughters, of peers or peeresses of Great Britain or Ireland,' and 'for the best drawing of any kind by young gentlemen under the age of twenty-one;' and again, 'the same premiums will be given for drawings by young ladies.' The amateur character of the competition is secured by the concluding proviso: 'N.B. Persons professing any branch of the polite arts, or the sons or daughters of such persons, will not be admitted candidates in these classes.'<sup>2</sup>

While emulation was thus encouraged, and instruction, both sound and specious, was obtainable by the unprofessional as well as

<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, p. 85, 2nd edit.

<sup>2</sup> See an advertisement dated 14 May, 1790, in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. ix. part 1, p. 458.

the professional student, the popular use of water-colours, and also their application to a more complete form of painting, was facilitated by a better manufacture of artists' materials. 'About 1780,' says Mr. Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> 'a great improvement began. Up to this time every artist had to prepare his own dry colours, which for want of sufficient knowledge of their chemical properties, and the leisure to grind and prepare them, gave him much trouble, and produced' most unsatisfactory 'results. They were, in fact, very bad, the materials ill selected, their fixed or fugitive qualities unknown, and when prepared they were scarcely fit for use. The dry colours, after grinding with water in gum, were moulded into a lump by the fingers. At the above date Messrs. Reeves turned their attention to the preparation of water-colours for our artists, and first moulded them into the form of cakes (as they are now called), on which their name was impressed. Their success was early acknowledged, and in 1781 the Society of Arts awarded their great silver palette to Messrs. Thomas and William Reeves for their improved water-colours.'

While the art was developing under these various impulses, the topographic draftsmen continued to exercise their calling. Recurring to Middiman's volume and continuing to turn over its leaves, we find upon a plate of 'Cliefden Spring, Bucks,' dated 25 May, 1785, the name *Samuel Ireland*. This artist afterwards took up on his own account the trade of topographic-print making, and published, in 1792-93, volumes of *Picturesque Views*, on the Thames, the Medway, and the Severn, which he aquatinted himself from his own sketches. Early in the year 1792 a new venture was made, in the publication of a series of small engravings of the same class as 'Sandby's Views,' and 'Watts's Seats.' It took the old name of *The Copper Plate Magazine*, with a second title of *Monthly Cabinet of Picturesque Prints*, which it further described as 'Sublime and Interesting Views in Great Britain and Ireland, beautifully engraved by the most eminent artists, from the Paintings and Drawings of the First Masters.' The issue was commenced in shilling<sup>2</sup> monthly numbers containing two prints apiece. These being collected in a volume at the end of

<sup>1</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue*, pp. 16, 17.

<sup>2</sup> At the end of vol. iv., viz. in May 1800, it was announced that, owing to the price of paper having nearly doubled and the expense of every other department having very considerably advanced, there was a monthly loss, and that the future price would be 1s. 6d. per number.



every two years, the complete work contains 250 plates, bearing dates from 1 Feb. 1792, to 1 June, 1802. The first volume was published by Harrison and Co. of Paternoster Row ; but in the second the name of *J. Walker*, engraver, of 16 Rosomon's Street, Clerkenwell, was added, and afterwards the plates were printed for Walker alone. Hence, and to distinguish it from Kearsley's older work of the same name, it is usually known as '*Walker's Copper Plate Magazine*.' These volumes are in oblong quarto, the plates being accompanied by descriptions printed on separate leaves. A portion of the subjects were also printed, each on the same page with its letterpress, and this folio edition was called *The Itinerant*. Many of the views are of towns ; but the old element of gentlemen's seats is largely included, as well as ruined abbeys, &c., and existing public buildings. Most of the plates, latterly nearly all, were engraved by *John Walker*, at first in conjunction with his father *William Walker*, who died on the 18th of February, 1793, before the first volume was complete. This elder Walker was, says Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> 'employed for nearly thirty years upon the illustration of the publications of the day, and also engraved some good plates for Alderman Boydell. Early in life he discovered the valuable art of rebiting etchings, and Woollett, who occasionally used the process, when successful was wont to exclaim : "Thank you, William Walker."'

Although the plates in this new copper-plate magazine have no special claim to admiration as specimens of engraving,<sup>2</sup> the series is of considerable historic interest, not only as carrying on the succession of works designed to illustrate British topography, but because it contains the earliest engraved designs of the two artists who, more than any others, are regarded as the regenerators, if not the actual founders, of our modern school of water-colour painting. Their names are *Thomas Girtin* and (as he then signed himself) *William Turner*. 'T. Girtin' is the designer of a view of Windsor, published in the fourth number, as Plate VII., with the date 1 May, 1792. He was then about seventeen years old, and probably the youngest of the artists employed. He had not received his full inspiration, and risen to his true standard. The name of *Turner*, who was of the same age (within a year) as *Girtin*, does not appear until two years later, namely

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>2</sup> Among the generally mediocre plates by Walker are a few of a better class, by Medland, Fitler, Heath, and Middiman.

with the date 1 May, 1794, attached to Plate LV. in the second volume, a view of Rochester.

Some of the other men who drew for Walker's magazine in its opening year demand prior notice by reason of their seniority. One of them, who drew the first plate, a view of Oxford, was EDWARD DAYES, a sound topographic draftsman, who tinted over Indian ink, in the established manner of the day, with accuracy and grace, and excelled in architectural subjects, enlivening them with careful groups of well-drawn figures. He had learned, too, from William Pether to scrape mezzotints, and practised that art as well as painted in miniature. He took pupils in drawing, and young Girtin had for a time been bound to him as an apprentice. The date of his birth is not known; but he began to exhibit at the Academy in 1786. A careful view of Greenwich Hospital, by him, with boats and figures, in the possession of Mr. Henry Pilleau, M.R.W.I., is dated 1788. There is a tinted drawing by him at South Kensington, representing Buckingham House, St. James's Park, almost a figure subject, dated 1790; and another of Ely Cathedral, drawn in the year 1792 (that of Walker's first plate), in which we may perceive an advance towards the full use of colour. Further mention will have to be made of Dayes as a writer on art, as well as in other ways less to his credit.

*F. Wheatley*, R.A., before mentioned, was another of the contributors of views to this first year's issue of the Walker prints. *Richard Corbould*, father of a family of good draftsmen, and himself a man of varied accomplishments, who painted (in oil and water-colour) history, portraits, landscapes and miniature enamels, was another. A view of Cliefden by him, engraved by Heath on Plate XX., is fine and broad in effect. He was at this time thirty-five years old, and had begun to exhibit in 1776 at the Free Society. He lived till 1831, dying in that year at the age of seventy-four. Then, a year younger than Corbould, there is *Charles Catton, Junior*. His father was a Royal Academician, and he a scene-painter, who also travelled and sketched for the topographic publishers. He was better known as a painter of animals. *Edward Francis Burney*, well known by his small book illustrations as an elegant figure and subject designer, also gives us a couple of views, one of his native town of Worcester. Old *Paul Sandby* also reappears, in a capacity in which landscape draftsmen had now begun to be habitually employed, that of putting into shape the works of amateurs. For example, Plate XXIII., 'Londonderry,' 1 Jan. 1793, is

drawn by Sandby 'from an original sketch by J. Nixon, Esq.' Among the so-called 'First Masters' who took part in this 'monthly cabinet,' there were also persons outside the bounds of the profession, whose drafts were not so settled by a regular practitioner. Their engagement may be taken as further evidence of the extending practice of *dilettante* art.

More important among the new names is that of *Francis Nicholson*, who contributed two views, dated August and December 1792. Nicholson was one of the earliest of our draftsmen to convince himself of the power of water-colour to compete with oil, and also one of the first to put his theory into practice. He was at this time thirty-nine years of age. His name had first appeared in the exhibition catalogues in 1789, and a dozen years afterwards he became one of the foundation members of the Water-Colour Society. By that time he had matured his practice, and there will in due course be much more to say both of his works and of himself.

It will have been seen that water-colour draftsmen had hitherto been much less under the influence of precedent than had their brethren who painted in oils. In the practice of their craft there was not so much to learn from pictures by the old masters. Thus they had but slightly participated in the advantages, which had been derived by the more established branches of their profession, from the liberality of possessors of fine works of art, in rendering them available for study. Many instances of such liberality are recorded in the last century. The earliest conspicuous example is that of Dr. Richard Mead, who died in 1754, aged eighty-four, 'a celebrated physician and great patron of artists and other men of genius. He for several years resided in the city, and latterly in New Ormond Street. He was one of the first collectors who threw open his gallery of pictures to the students and all amateurs of art. His house, indeed, might be said to have been the first academy of painting.'<sup>1</sup>

Then, in the month of March 1758, the Duke of Richmond opened for young students his statue gallery at Whitehall, 'furnished with casts of the most celebrated ancient and modern figures at Rome and Florence,'<sup>2</sup> with the result, it is said, of inducing a purer taste in figure-drawing. There are few lives of eminent English painters of that transitional time, in which an early inspiration is not traced to the sight of some old master's work in the private galleries of the wealthy.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 35 n.

<sup>2</sup> *Pye's Patronage of British Art*, p. 83.



The age was now approaching when the landscape draftsmen also would have some early masters to look up to for the formation of their taste, and as models of style; and opportunities for making such profitable retrospect were afforded at the epoch at which our chronicle has now arrived. There chanced to be an amateur, whose fine and cultivated taste and practical knowledge, combined with a warm-hearted spirit of benevolence, and an earnest desire to foster a rising school, of which he discerned the promise of excellence, enabled him about this time to do a most essential service to some young aspirants in this branch of art. This was Dr. THOMAS MONRO, already mentioned as the kind friend in need to John Cozens during the affliction under which that artist ended his days. As a leader of connoisseurship, he was looked upon in his day much in the same light as Sir George Beaumont and Mr. Payne Knight. But in the exercise of his patronage he was specially distinguished by the services he rendered to water-colour painting, in these its early days. The Earl of Essex, Mr. Lascelles ('Prince Lascelles' as he was called, from his likeness to the Prince of Wales), Dr. Monro, and Dr. Burney, with two or three more, seem to have been the chief encouragers of this branch of art; but none to have taken more effectual means to promote the education of young artists than Dr. Thomas Monro.

He was the youngest son of Dr. John Monro. His father, who had recently died, in 1791, at the age of seventy-six, had also been endowed with an elegant taste, and his collection of books and of prints was very considerable. Deeply versed in the early history of engraving, he gave great help to Strutt in his work on that subject. There were at least five generations of Dr. Monros,<sup>1</sup> beginning with John's father, Dr. James Monro (born 1680, died 1752). They were chiefly known in their profession by skill in the treatment of insanity. The member of the family with whom we are particularly concerned was one of the physicians who attended King George the Third, as well as poor John Cozens.

It was in or about the year 1793 that Dr. Thomas Monro, then

<sup>1</sup> There is some excuse for confusion among so many doctors of one name. And when we read of three more Dr. Monros, a father and two sons, of a Scotch family, who distinguished themselves as physicians and writers of scientific works, the pedigree becomes even less determinable. Redgrave (*Descriptive Catalogue S.K.M.* p. 23) is one generation behind in attributing Dr. Thomas Monro's patronage of water-colour art to Dr. John Monro. Thornbury (*Life of Turner*) and others spell the name 'Munro.' Possibly, also, the fact that Mr. Munro of Novar was a great collector of Turner's works, may have helped to mislead some writers.

thirty-four years of age, removed from Bedford Square, where he had previously resided, to No. 4 or 6 Adelphi Terrace, which row of houses had been built about twenty years before by the brothers Adam, and then overhung the Thames as it now overhangs the river embankment. His house was filled with pictures and drawings, many by Gainsborough, hanging on the walls, and he allowed them to be freely copied by young artists. These he took great delight, too, in assisting with his advice. He was himself an able amateur draftsman, a pupil (as above stated) of Laporte's, and an ardent sketcher, as well as worshipper of works of art.

The story has often been told of Sir George Beaumont's practice of taking Claude's little picture of 'Narcissus' with him to look at while he travelled. Dr. Monro was an enthusiast of like habits. So fond was he of works of art that he was never satisfied without some of them in sight. Inside the roof of his carriage he had a netting placed,<sup>1</sup> in which he always slipped a folio of drawings when he went to his country house at Fetcham<sup>2</sup> in Surrey. At home he contrived to have his drawings so arranged that they could readily be removed in case of fire.

He seems to have had a special fondness for Gainsborough. 'Of all the imitators of' that painter's 'style of sketching,' says Pyne, 'perhaps excepting the late Mr. Hoppner,<sup>3</sup> he was the nearest to his prototype.' The same writer declares that he had 'seen many of these *pasticci*' which it would 'puzzle the cognoscenti to detect from the originals.'<sup>4</sup> It was this Dr. Monro who is mentioned above as having purchased from Gainsborough's daughter her father's interesting 'camera.'

Dr. Monro's patronage of young artists was not confined to giving them access to his pictures and portfolios, and letting them make copies, and assisting them with his own judicious advice. He had a pleasant way of bringing them together, on a system which combined the benefit of this kind of study with mutual instruction, and with a small pecuniary profit to them at the same time. In winter evenings,

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* C. Varley.

<sup>2</sup> A view of Dr. Monro's house at Fetcham, by Thomas Girtin, was bought for the South Kensington Museum, at Dr. Percy's sale, 17 April, 1890.

<sup>3</sup> A large number of Hoppner's slight landscape sketches in black chalk on grey paper are at the British Museum.

<sup>4</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 8. A chalk drawing answering to this description was in the collection of the late Dr. Percy.

he encouraged young men to make a studio of his house. There they put their sketches into pictorial shape under the doctor's eye, and he gave them their supper and half a crown apiece for their work. Desks were provided, with a candle which served for two sketchers, one sitting opposite to the other. Not a few of our best water-colour painters thus derived benefit from their early practice at Dr. Monro's ; but the most distinguished of all were the two future artists, whose names must ever be linked together as the real founders of our water-colour school—Girtin and Turner.





## BOOK II

### THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THOMAS GIRTIN

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#### CHAPTER I

##### TURNER AND GIRTIN AS STUDENTS AND REFORMERS.

Girtin and Turner with Dr. Monro—Early drawings—Mutual relations—Different dispositions—Turner's admiration of Girtin—Girtin's birth, parentage, and early life—Apprenticed to Dayes—Imprisonment and release—Colouring prints—London river scenes—Work for architects—Mr. Henderson—Masters studied by Turner and Girtin—Girtin's exhibits at the R.A.—Sketches in Wales—Teaches amateurs—Taken to North by Mr. Moore—Influence of mountain scenery—Draws again for 'Walker's Magazine'—Changes of address—Charged with mannerism—Processes and materials—Taking out lights—F. Nicholson and the Earl of Warwick—Influence of Girtin's 'style'—His perseverance—Habits when sketching—Patrons.

TURNER and Girtin were of one age, born in 1775, and acquainted before they studied together at Dr. Monro's and perhaps shared the same candle of a winter's evening. It is not exactly known at what dates they began to work there, or how long they so worked in company. A memorandum by the late Mr. John Pye, the engraver, tells us that the first mention of Turner in Dr. Monro's journal is in 1793, and that Girtin was not employed by him as long as Turner was. He says that 'Dr. Monro engaged them at two or three shillings apiece and a good supper, to put in effects of black and white and of colour into black lead outlines.' When the Doctor removed to Adelphi Terrace,<sup>1</sup> they were on the verge of manhood, and the proficiency of each had been already recognized. Girtin, as we have seen, had had a design engraved by the Walkers in the new 'Copper Plate Magazine' in 1792; and Turner, who had been an Academy student since 1789,

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Monro had also a country house at Bushey, near Watford, besides that at Fetcham. Turner told David Roberts, R.A., that he and Girtin had often walked to Bushey and back to make drawings for their kind patron, at the price above stated. (See Watts's 'Biographical Sketch of Turner,' prefixed to the *Liber Fluviorum*, p. xi.)

had in 1790, when fifteen years of age, shown his first work at Somerset House, a tinted drawing of Lambeth Palace,<sup>1</sup> to be followed by others for many successive years.

Dr. Monro had himself been buying Turner's youthful drawings at two guineas apiece,<sup>2</sup> from his father, a thrifty little hairdresser in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden; who, having many customers, had managed to establish a good connection among patrons, to the advantage of his clever son. Young Turner had now set up a studio of his own, in Hand Court, close to his father's shop.

The acquaintance between Girtin and Turner is said to have commenced during a joint employment, as lads, to colour prints for John Raphael Smith, painter and mezzotint engraver, who also carried on an extensive trade, as a publisher and print-dealer, in King Street, Covent Garden. It is not improbable that the Doctor's acquaintance with them was made while they were thus engaged. There is not much known as to what kind of original work Girtin produced under Dr. Monro's hospitable roof; but Turner's grey drawings, some of them based perhaps on his host's own sketches, are met with from time to time. When Dr. Monro's collection was sold, in 1833, Dr. Burney and Turner were together in the sale room. 'I understand,' said Turner, pointing to some of the lots to which his own name was attached, 'that you have the bad taste to admire these things more than I do now.' 'It will be sufficient for me to say,' answered the polite connoisseur, 'that I admire everything you do, Mr. Turner.' 'Well,' returned the other, a little flattered, 'perhaps they are not so bad; for half a crown—and one's oysters.'<sup>3</sup> It is possible that Girtin also may have had a hand in some of these drawings, there being good authority for saying that he made a great number of outlines, some of which the Doctor got Turner to tint in grey, and just work afterwards with colour; and that Girtin complained of this as not giving him the same chance of learning to paint.<sup>4</sup>

It was by the attraction of like proclivities in art alone that the two lads were brought together. As they grew up, it appeared that

<sup>1</sup> The drawing was lent by Mrs. Courtauld to the Turner collection at the Royal Academy in 1887. A view of the gateway, belonging to Mr. P. C. Hardwick, apparently of about the same date, was among the 'Drawings of Architectural Subjects' exhibited at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1884.

<sup>2</sup> Pye's MS. Notes.

<sup>3</sup> This was told to Mr. Jenkins in April 1865 by James Holland, who had it from Dr. Burney himself.

<sup>4</sup> This was told to Mr. Jenkins by Cornelius Varley on 1 January, 1858.



their characters and tastes were in other respects widely different. Turner, it is well known, was reticent of his knowledge, and close as to his methods of work. Girtin, on the other hand, was of an open, careless, and sociable disposition, always ready to impart what he knew, and assist even his rivals in art. As to their 'human relationship,' we have, as Mr. Monkhouse observes, in his 'Life of Turner,'<sup>1</sup> very little information. 'Turner,' he writes, 'always spoke of Girtin as "Poor Tom," and proposed to, and possibly did, put up a tablet to his memory; but there are no letters or anecdotes to show that what we all mean by "friendship" ever existed between them.'<sup>2</sup> What Girtin thought of Turner we do not know; but the latter declared that 'Tom was a brilliant fellow,'<sup>3</sup> and always expressed a high admiration of his abilities. Girtin's son, however, told Mr. Jenkins that he had twice written to Turner upon some matter of interest to him about his father, but that Turner never had the courtesy to answer his letters. Although Turner's name is, as it deserves to be, incomparably the greater in the history of painting, that of his short-lived *confrère* in art demands for several reasons the first, and in some respects a higher, place in the present record.

THOMAS GIRTIN was the elder son of a rope-maker in Southwark,<sup>4</sup> who is said to have done a large business in cordage for shipping. Dying young (Thornbury says he was killed when hunting), he left his two boys, Tom and Jack, to the care of his widow, who took rooms for the three 'over a shop' at No. 2 St. Martin's-le-Grand, in or about the year 1783. Such at least is the date if, as it is alleged, Tom Girtin was eight years old at his father's death. For he seems to have been born on the 18th of February, 1775. Some writers, including Pilkington, Redgrave, and Miller, misled apparently by an obituary notice in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' give the date 1773, which may there be a misprint. But the date 1775 accords with the age given, both on his tombstone and by Dayes (to whom he had been

<sup>1</sup> Page 24.

<sup>2</sup> The same writer adds: 'We are equally ignorant as to the amount of intimacy between Turner and Dr. Monro, for though the latter did not die till 1833, there is nothing to show that they ever met after Turner's students days were over.' Pye declared (MS. Notes) that, in Dr. Monro's opinion, the great painter was 'blunt, coarse, vulgar, and sly.' So perhaps his patron may not have sought his society.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J., *ex relatione* Mr. Chambers Hall.

<sup>4</sup> No more is known of his ancestry; or of a certain 'I. Girtin' (called 'James' in the Catalogue of the South Kensington Art Library), who etched a series of poorly executed *Portraits of Celebrated Painters*, published, with some by other hands, in 4to, 1817.

apprenticed), and also assigned to him by his own family. Pye, in his MS. Notes, gives the same date, as copied from a mourning ring worn by his widow, and—best evidence of all—from one worn by his mother, who survived him.

‘From his earliest childhood,’ says Pye,<sup>1</sup> ‘he displayed a decided passion for drawing and modelling ;’ covering ‘every scrap of paper that came to hand,’ add the Messrs. Redgrave,<sup>2</sup> ‘with his boyish fancies ; but,’ continue the latter writers, ‘as he himself said that other boys of his own age, ten or twelve, who amused themselves or idled in the same way, drew as well as himself, we may be assured that there was nothing very marked in these childish efforts.’ His mother, humouring his taste, allowed him to take some elementary lessons in drawing from one Mr. Fisher, of Aldersgate Street, close by ; and, when he was old enough, apprenticed him to Dayes.

Thornbury, in his ‘Life of Turner,’ give a melodramatic account of Dayes’s unjust behaviour, and Girtin’s subsequent rescue from his tyranny. The apprentice, finding himself regarded only as a means of getting money, and that he was paying back in work more than the value of his premium, rebels, and is cast into prison for contumacy. There he shows his genius by decorating with landscapes the walls of his cell. They astonish the warder and attract the curious ; and then there comes upon the scene a *deus ex machinâ* in the shape of the great Earl of Essex, who buys up the indentures, burns them before the young artist’s eyes, and carries him off to ‘the almost regal uxury of Cassiobury, where Girtin, free and happy,’ produces ‘some of his greatest works.’

All this reads rather like a picturesque romance introduced for the sake of a learned parallel drawn from the life of ‘Fra Lippo Lippi ;’ and some will prefer the tale in the less varnished, if somewhat caustic, words of John Pye.<sup>3</sup> Young Girtin, he tells us, soon excelled his master, which ‘this jealous and small-minded creature’ never forgave him. The praise bestowed upon his pupil was gall to him, and increased his hatred. In order to check his progress, he employed him to colour prints week after week and month after month. This was his employment till, feeling himself designed for better things, he expostulated with Dayes, telling him he was placed with him to learn to draw, not to colour prints. His tyrant insisted on his obedience.

<sup>1</sup> MS. Notes.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 387 ; and see *Library of Fine Arts*, iii. 310.

<sup>3</sup> MS. Notes.

Girtin refused; on which Dayes committed him to prison as a refractory apprentice. The Earl of Essex, hearing of his imprisonment, went to see him, and saw that he had covered the walls of his room with spirited sketches. Pleased with the young man's frank and open manner, he released him from confinement and from the tyranny of Dayes by buying up his indentures; and from that time to the day of Girtin's death, the Earl continued to be one of his kindest friends and patrons.

We have seen, however, that Girtin in these days was not above turning an honest penny by 'colouring prints.' It was shortly after his pupilage with Dayes that he was engaged by Raphael Smith for this sort of work. The occupation was not quite of the infantine kind which we are accustomed now to consider it. It is true that modern children get an early knowledge of colour from so using their boxes of paints; but it is also true that water-colour art itself was, in its infancy, almost confined to a similar practice. There exists a curious treatise, a tract of sixty-four octavo pages, 'printed for J. Peele, at Locke's Head in Amen Corner, Paternoster Row, 1731,' entitled *The Art of Painting and Drawing in Water-Colours*, 'put together,' as the writer tells us, 'after years of study and labour, at the instance of a noble friend for his instruction' in the said art. It treats mainly of the sources and mode of preparation of certain 'transparent colours of every sort.' But the chief or only use to which these pigments are described as applicable, is the colouring or tinting of engravings. One of the leading chapters is headed, 'Of colours for illuminating of prints in the best manner, or of Painting in Water Colours.' And the few practical instructions which follow, show that there is a certain *technique* to be studied even in so apparently simple an operation. If the paper be 'pure white,' no colour is to be used upon it. All 'heavy colours,' that is to say colours with much body, such as vermilion and Indian red, will, unless used in moderation, 'drown the shades or strokes of the engraver.' Sometimes, however, adds the writer, in a saving clause of perhaps unintended irony, 'they had better be hidden than preserved.'<sup>1</sup> From this early colouring of engravings

<sup>1</sup> The work concludes with a description of a 'portable case for colour,' to be made in ivory with thirty-two circular cavities, for pigments to use with gum-water, not unlike in arrangement the tin field-sketching boxes in familiar use in the present day. But the writer has no idea of such an apparatus being used for landscape after nature. He merely recommends it to 'such persons who are curious in making observations of the colours of flowers,



the use of transparent water-colour had been extended, as we have seen, to the staining and tinting of grey drawings; and when aquatint came afterwards to be extensively employed as an efficient means of multiplying such coloured designs almost in facsimile, the occupation of washer became, as we shall see, a regular branch of business, in which many persons were employed by the publishers of prints. It is not a bad kind of drill for training a young artist's hand; for some practice is required to lay washes evenly and of due tone, as indeed to do anything well, down to so simple a matter as turning the handle of a barrel organ.

But Girtin, and Turner with him, were at the same time taking lessons from nature. The shores of the Thames at Westminster, Lambeth, and Chelsea, not then, or for very many years to come, bound in and stiffened by a granite border, but irregular and ragged, with a garniture of mud-banks, and abounding in picturesque groups of stranded barges, floating river-craft, and old ramshackle wharves, afforded prolific subjects for an artist's pencil. Girtin said that a study he made of the steps of the old Savoy palace then in ruins 'was a lesson from which he dated all the future knowledge he displayed in the pictorial representation of ruined masonry.'<sup>1</sup> Thus they acquired skill with the brush, which got them other professional work besides that of colouring prints. Between 1788 and 1790 both Girtin and Turner were employed by architects to wash in skies and perhaps add backgrounds as well as to lay flat tints. And so we find Tom Girtin at seventeen or eighteen selected to make topographic drawings for Walker's magazine,<sup>2</sup> and one of the young artists at work at Dr. Monro's.

There was another amateur and collector of landscape drawings, a very near neighbour of Dr. Monro's, who, probably following his example, allowed young artists to make copies from the works of older masters. This was Mr. John Henderson, who lived at No. 3 or No 4<sup>3</sup> Adelphi Terrace. Both Girtin and Turner availed themselves largely of the privilege so offered; and as the copies they made, or

to have always in their pocket.' Mr. Redgrave (*Descriptive Catalogue*, 16) points to the republication of this work in 1770 as evidence that the materials of water-colour art had not improved at the latter date.

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 388-9.

<sup>2</sup> One was the 'Windsor,' published 1 May, 1792, before mentioned; the other was 'Woolwich,' published 1 May, 1793.

<sup>3</sup> Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, p. 55, 2nd edit.

some of them, remained in Mr. Henderson's possession, and have now, under his son's bequest, become national property, they may be studied as living illustrations of the early tastes and tendencies of these two artists, and of the difference between them.

'It would seem that the processes of education they respectively adopted were the inverse of one another; that Girtin acquired a style of his own by sketching from nature, and used it as a language to interpret the works of other artists; while Turner, in the early part of his career, studied the works of other artists in order to obtain a command of their style and manner, that he might apply them afterwards as he found occasion in the varied interpretation of nature. It was not until he had tried his hand against every painter in succession that he formed his own distinctive style. In the wide range of his practice, the great painter comprised, absorbed, and finally assimilated all. It is fair to assume that among the original artists from whom he learnt a lesson was his early friend and companion, Tom Girtin.

'Turner was a pupil of Malton's, and Girtin of Dayes's, but it happened that each studied for practice the works of the other's teacher. Turner's copies from Dayes were so nearly facsimiles, that they have deceived collectors, whereas Girtin's drawings after Malton have his own colour and handling engrafted upon the light and shade of the original.'<sup>1</sup>

'Girtin's drawings made for Mr. Henderson in or before 1793,' says Pye,<sup>2</sup> 'are, as far as outlines go, three copies of Malton's engraved views, the Mansion House, the Royal Exchange, and St. George's Church. They are like Malton's in form and perspective; but in nothing else. They are invested with new effects, being composed alike of colour and *clair-obscur*, and can only be justly appreciated by being seen. The subjects respectively are so changed that by being seen in new dresses beside the prints, they receive irresistibly the charm of fine art.' There are also copies by Girtin from Canaletti, Piranesi, Hearne, Marlow, and Morland, in the same collection, which are impressed with like originality. At Mr. Henderson's, Turner is said<sup>3</sup> to have preferred copying from Hearne, while Girtin copied from Canaletti and Piranesi. The biographer of Girtin in the 'Gentleman's Magazine' tells us that Canaletti was the first master that struck his attention forcibly; and his earliest *penchant* appears to have been

<sup>1</sup> *The Spectator*, 14 Aug. 1875.

<sup>2</sup> MS. Notes.

<sup>3</sup> Miller's *Picturesque Views by Turner and Girtin*.

for architectural subjects of the kind treated by that painter. It might be added that the same feeling is manifested in the last work on which his dying hand was engaged—his series of views in Paris. He is also said to have derived much profit from a study of Wilson.<sup>1</sup>

In 1794, the year in which the life of Cozens virtually ended, Girtin had his first work at the Academy. It was a drawing of 'Ely Minster.' From that time till the year 1801, the last but one of his short life, he continued to exhibit annually except in the year 1796. He is said to have made a journey into Wales in 1794; but no Welsh subject is named among these until 1799, when he sends two views of 'Bethkellert.' Next year, 1795, he has two drawings, 'Warwick Castle' and 'Peterborough Cathedral.'

We also hear less of Girtin than of Turner, as employed by architects. The latter is said<sup>2</sup> to have been still engaged in 1796 in supplying their drawings with pictorial attraction. But Girtin, besides affording this aid to professional brethren, was beginning to be in request by amateurs. He found profitable occupation in giving them lessons,<sup>3</sup> and their sketches were placed in his hands that he might put in the appropriate 'effects.'

He was not a student of the Academy, but, as Pye observed,<sup>4</sup> he does not appear to have been less conversant with the elements of art than Turner, who was an Academy student. For landscape art was not taught in the schools. Its rules had not been formulated, and its growing traditions were as yet possessed by a few practitioners only.

Girtin's taste and knowledge led to his employment in a capacity allied to that which had given experience to the pencils of Cozens and 'Warwick' Smith. He was taken, not into Italy, but, what was more conducive to the development of his natural style, into the mountainous and picturesque regions of his own country. He became the travelling companion of Mr. James Moore, F.S.A.,<sup>5</sup> an antiquary and amateur topographer, to whose introduction to the scenery of Scotland and Yorkshire is attributed a change which now came over

<sup>1</sup> *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 317.    <sup>2</sup> Letter from the late Mr. Bonomi to John Pye.

<sup>3</sup> Turner also gave lessons when a young man. 'There are old people still living,' says Thornbury, 'who remember Turner in 1795 or 1796—that is to say, when he was twenty or twenty-one, and taught in London, at Hadley (Herts), and at other places.' His biographer is probably right in adding: 'He was too reserved and too tongue-tied to be able to teach what he knew, even had he cared to disclose his hard-earned secrets.'

<sup>4</sup> MS. Notes.

<sup>5</sup> 'Girtin, Turner, and Dayes at various times travelled with Mr. Moore to execute drawings for him, for his topographical works.'—J. J. J.



his manner of painting, and a sudden strengthening, in his hands, of the power of water-colour art. Inspired by the 'dark and true and tender' North, he 'began to treat mountain and lake scenery in a manner very different from his predecessors,' imitating the effects of 'heavy overhanging clouds throwing the vast mass of a mountain which occupied the whole distance under a deep and solemn mass of gloom.'<sup>1</sup> A 'daring style of effect' and a 'grandeur and originality of conception in light and shadow,' for which he was soon to become celebrated, arose, it is said, from a chance observation of the solemn change produced by twilight in a scene of buildings, bridge, and river in an 'ancient town,' whereof he had made a midday outline under the broad sun. Hence, acquiring 'a habit of looking at Nature, clothed in her morning and her evening robe,' he was afterwards enabled to 'throw either garb over his own landscape compositions at his will.'<sup>2</sup> He became 'fond of contrasting cool shadows with warm and brilliant lights spread over the picturesque ruins in which he delighted, giving by these means an appearance of sunshine and a splendour of effect, startling to those who had been accustomed to the tamer manner of the topographers, or even to the poetical tenderness of the works of Cozens.'<sup>3</sup>

Girtin is said to have accompanied Mr. Moore to 'Peterborough, Lichfield, Lincoln, and many other places remarkable for their rich scenery, either in nature or architecture;'<sup>4</sup> and the subjects of his drawings, exhibited or engraved, show that he made sketches in various parts of England and Wales. It was probably in 1796 that he first went to Scotland. He had nothing at Somerset House that year, and nothing from his hand had been published in Walker's magazine since May 1793. But he has no fewer than ten drawings in the Academy exhibition of 1797, two from Scotland, two from Northumberland, and six from York, besides an elaborate interior of St. Alban's Church<sup>5</sup> which shows that as an architectural draftsman he had already arrived at the maturity of his power.

In the 'Copper Plate Magazine,' volume iii., with various dates in 1797, there are 'Warkworth,' 'Newcastle-upon-Tyne,' and 'Bamborough Castle,' as well as 'Marlow Bridge,' by Girtin, and also the following

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 390-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, *ubi supra*.

<sup>4</sup> Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> Formerly in the possession of Sir William Tite, and afterwards in that of Mr. Edward Cohen. It was exhibited at the *Burlington Fine Arts Club* in 1871 and 1875, and at the *Grosvenor Gallery* in 1877-78.

plates from 'Sketches by James Moore, Esq.,' viz. 'Lincoln,' 'Duff House, Bamffshire,' 'Exeter,' 'Elgin Cathedral,' and 'Jedburgh Abbey,' in all of which, though Girtin's name does not appear, there can be little doubt that he had a hand. But these prints of Walker's do not enable us to form a judgment as to the quality of the original drawings.

He had by this time left his mother's lodgings in St. Martin's-le-Grand. In 1797 we find him at 35 Drury Lane. The next year he is at 25 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden, and in 1799 at 6 Long Acre. Thus Girtin, young as he was (he attained his majority in 1796), became established as an artist of note, and, what was more to his professional advantage, as a favourite teacher of water-colour drawing.

As had been the case with Gainsborough, the manner of Girtin's painting, broad in its generalization, and well adapted to express his conceptions in an abstract form, had in it some salient features which attracted a host of superficial imitators. An effective opposing of warm colours to cold, and dark tones to light, and a unity obtained by the sacrifice of detail and of natural variety, were all that constituted in their eyes the 'style' of Girtin. On the strength, in part at least, of their imitations, Girtin himself has been charged with affectation, and a tendency to degenerate into a mannerist<sup>1</sup> or a *chiqueur*.<sup>2</sup> Dayes, his old master, who was never cured of the grudge he bore his too clever pupil, declared that because 'master Tom chose to wash in dirty water,' his imitators not only washed in dirty water too, but 'in the very puddle water which he had made more dirty.' And when, shortly before Girtin's death, a portfolio of crude works by a disciple of the school was placed before Dayes for approval, he persisted in holding them up to ridicule as the result of an application of 'the blue bag.'<sup>3</sup>

It is not to be inferred, however, from the above remarks, that Girtin's teaching was of a superficial character, or that he was ever likely to become a trickster, like Payne. He 'did not,' says his biographer Miller, 'flatter amateurs, and pretend to teach them secrets for money.' The Dowager Duchess of Sutherland (who in Girtin's time was Lady Gower), one of many persons whom he taught in the higher ranks of society, used to say that 'he told every-

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 396.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, *ubi supra*.

thing' to his favourite pupil Lady Long,<sup>1</sup> wife of Sir Charles Long, afterwards Lord Farnborough. 'He would point out the time of the day, the cast shadows and particular effect suited to the time and scene &c.—a mode of teaching far in advance of the time.'<sup>2</sup>

Nor did he confine the benefit of his instruction to the wealthy *dilettante*, who paid him so much a lesson. His painting-room was ever open to his brother artists, and he was always happy to give them the benefit of his advice and instruction. Indeed, he was often blamed by his friends for allowing them to stand over him while at work, that they might see how he produced his effects.<sup>3</sup>

It is perhaps due to this open liberality of Girtin's that writers have been able to describe his technical processes in considerable detail. The following account is extracted from the *Somerset House Gazette*.<sup>4</sup> 'Girtin made his drawings, with but few exceptions, on cartridge paper.'<sup>5</sup> He chose this material as his aim was to procure a bold and striking chiaroscuro, with splendour of colour, and without attention to detail.' Then, beginning with the sky: 'The azure spaces were washed with a mixture of indigo and lake, and the shadows of the clouds with light red and indigo, Indian red and indigo, and an

<sup>1</sup> Pyne, writing in 1824, says that Lady Long, besides being, like her husband, a patron of the fine arts, 'was known to the world of art' as having 'a talent for painting and drawing that might fairly rank her with the professors of the living school,' and that 'among the admirers of that lady's topographical drawings, none were more ardent than Girtin.' (*Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 129.)

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* J. Holland.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. i. pp. 66, 83, 84.

<sup>5</sup> 'He was the first,' says his biographer in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, 'who introduced the custom of drawing upon cartridge paper, by which means he avoided that spotty glittering glare, so common in drawings made on white paper.' 'It is said that the wire-worked cartridge he loved to work on was only to be obtained at a stationer's at Charing Cross, and was folded in quires. As the half-sheet was not large enough for his purpose, he had to spread out the sheet, and the crease of the folding being at times more absorbent than the other parts of the paper, a dark blot was caused across the sky, and indeed across the whole picture in many of his works. This defect was at first tolerated on account of the great originality and merit of his works, and gradually gave a higher value to those in which it occurred, being considered a proof of their originality.' (Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 393-4.) 'But,' writes Mr. Papworth (MS.) 'in those days paper *was* paper; it was made of white linen rags reduced to pulp by a badly made wooden machine which left it fibrous. Shortly afterwards Mr. Whatman produced, at his manufactory in Kent, a paper called vellum paper, which at once superseded all other fabrics. Its texture was calculated to receive the pigments and to bear out [*sic*] with a vigour of effect that the wire-marked paper could never be brought to possess.' Then 'the progress of science taught the means of adulteration, the use of materials which chemically quarrel with each other and the colours, and the employment of superbly finished machinery which leaves no fibrous texture. . . . In a short period the damage of such operations was felt by Turner, who found that his paper required preparation; and even a quarter of a century had not elapsed before "old paper" was worth a guinea a sheet to men like Harding.'



occasional addition of lake. The warm tone of the cartridge paper frequently served for the lights without tinting, acquiring additional warmth by being opposed to the cool colour of the azure, and shadow of the clouds. . . . When he had accomplished the laying-in of his sky, he would proceed with great facility in the general arrangement of his tints, on the buildings, trees, water, and other objects. Every colour appeared to be placed with a most judicious perception to effecting a general union, or harmony. His light stone tints were put in with thin washes of Roman ochre, the same mixed with light red and certain spaces free from the warm tints were touched with grey, composed of light red and indigo, or, brighter still, with ultramarine and light red. The brick buildings with Roman ochre, light red and lake, and a mixture of Roman ochre, lake and indigo, or Roman ochre, madder brown and indigo; also with burnt sienna and Roman ochre, madder brown and Roman ochre, and these colours in all their combinations. For finishing the buildings which came the nearest to the foreground, where the local colour and form were intended to be represented with particular force and effect, Vandyck brown and Cologn-earth were combined with these tints, which gave depth and richness of tones, that raised the scale of effect without the least diminution of harmony—on the contrary, the richness of effect was increased from their glowing warmth, by neutralizing the previous tones, and by throwing them into their respective distances, or into proper keeping. The trees, which he frequently introduced in his views, exhibiting all the varieties of autumnal hues, he coloured with corresponding harmony to the scale of richness exhibited on his buildings. The greens for these operations were composed of gambouge, indigo, and burnt sienna, occasionally heightened with yellow lake, brown pink, and gambouge, these mixed too sometimes with Prussian blue. The shadows for the trees, with indigo and burnt sienna, and with a most beautiful harmonious shadow tint, composed of grey and madder brown; which, perhaps, is nearer to the general tone of the shadow of trees than any other combinations that can be formed with water-colours. Girtin made his greys sometimes with Venetian red and indigo, Indian red and indigo, and a useful and most harmonious series of warm and cool greys, of Roman ochre, indigo, and lake, which, used judiciously, will serve to represent the basis for every species of subject and effect, as viewed in the middle grounds under the

influence of that painter's atmosphere so prevalent in the autumnal season in our humid climate; which constantly exhibits to the picturesque eye the charms of rich effects, in a greater variety than any country in Europe.' 'His palette,' says Girtin's biographer in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' 'was covered with a greater variety of tints than almost any of his contemporaries.'

The Messrs. Redgrave<sup>1</sup> declare that Girtin was the first who followed out a procedure the reverse of that which had hitherto prevailed—laying in the whole of his work with the true local colour of the various parts, and afterwards adding the shadows with their own local and individual tints. But they allege that this was only quite at the end of his career, and contend that in 'his mode of execution he did not add much to the resources of art.' They consider that in 1798 Turner was in advance of Girtin in the employment of executive processes.

It has further been said that Girtin was the discoverer of the mode of wiping out lights in water-colour painting; and that he made the discovery by an accident. The story is that 'he spilt some drops of water upon a drawing, and, fearing that it would injure the part upon which it fell, took his handkerchief carefully to sop it up; when, the colour being softened by the moisture, it came away upon the handkerchief, leaving the exact shape of the spots of water white. It struck him that this plan of getting out lights might be applied in the progress of a drawing, and he used it with so much success that for several seasons his works attracted particular attention in this respect. It was supposed that, instead of being taken out after the picture was advanced, they were stopped out in the commencement; and the colourmen got up a preparation which they sold under the name of 'Girtin's Stopping-out Mixture.'<sup>2</sup> Such a method has, indeed, been employed by several artists.

According to Pyne, the process of 'taking out the lights with bread' was 'a discovery which originated with Turner,' whose 'magnificent effects, aided by this process, were first exhibited at the Royal Academy,' when 'all the painters were puzzled to find out by what art he performed this graphic magic.'<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Jenkins contends that 'the best evidence is in favour of

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 387, 395.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* T. Cafe.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 193, 194. The writer proceeds to lament that the most brilliant effects produced in this way are transient, owing to the fugitive nature of the colours used for glazing.

Turner's being the discoverer of some mode of getting out lights.' He was unable to detect in Girtin's drawings any evidence of his having adopted the practice. That painter, he says, 'occasionally used some kind of white, as upon a large drawing of the *Interior of Exeter Cathedral*, belonging to Miss Miller, not only upon the highest lights, but mixed with colour in touches upon the screen.'

But there was a third artist in whose behalf a claim to the honour of the invention might be put in with perhaps equal plausibility. This was the Yorkshire painter, *Francis Nicholson*, above mentioned. Nicholson, like all true masters of our water-colour school, relied entirely upon transparent pigment for the richness and strength of his drawings. And Pyne illustrates the fact by the following anecdote, which he puts into the mouth of an informant, whom he represents as 'no mean performer himself,' of a visit to the Earl of Warwick's collection. 'On looking over his portfolios, containing the works of Sandby, Rooker, Cozens, Warwick Smith, and others of the water-colour school,' says the informant, 'I was struck with some clever pieces, scenes in Ireland, executed in body-colours by Walmsley, one of the scene-painters at Covent Garden Theatre. The subjects were highly picturesque, representing rocks and waterfalls, his Lordship's favourite studies. "What think you of these?" says my Lord. "I admire them much, sir," answers the professor. "The rocks are boldly designed; but what I most admire is the water, rolling so turbulently over its rocky bed. There is the advantage of body-colours, my Lord. You can *put on* the lights; now, in transparent water-colours, you must *leave* the lights; hence you never can represent such scenes with clearness, force, and spirit united. There rests one of the insurmountable difficulties of that species of art, touching the means for the faithful imitation of nature." "Now, sir," replies Lord Warwick, "this is what I expected. Every connoisseur, nay almost every artist, has made the same remarks. But, sir, I will surprise you; and that, I trust, most agreeably." His Lordship then takes from his portfolio two large drawings, scenes in North Wales, of subjects similar to those of Walmsley's. "Marvellous!" exclaims the critic. "Is it possible? Can these be done in transparent water-colours?" "Yes, sir." "By whom, my Lord?" "By Francis Nicholson, a provincial artist, living in the neighbourhood of York." "I never heard his name, my Lord, till now, but . . . he will soon be *déterré*. Such a genius must be one of us. The metropolis is his



sphere.”<sup>1</sup> Nicholson fulfilled the prediction, and was afterwards long and profitably settled in London among his *confrères* of the brush.

The suggestive nature of Girtin's drawings, so characteristic of a true sketch, so different from mere imitation, laid them open to a charge of incompleteness. Dayes, in a short, unkind paragraph, written after his pupil's death, declares that they were ‘generally too slight,’ though he admits them to be ‘the offspring of a strong imagination.’ Pyne tells us<sup>2</sup> that ‘Girtin is supposed to have been tempted to work with less regard to correctness of form, in proportion to the ease with which he produced richness of colour, on the cartridge paper, compared with the labour of executing on white paper, and to have become at last so enamoured with colouring and effect, as to consider drawing of little consequence to the general character of a picture,’ which ‘slovenly aberrations of genius’ produced a bad effect upon art through the imitations of admiring *dilettanti*.

But others who knew him said that he was indefatigable in his profession, and equally painstaking in the field and in the studio, his devotion to art being unbounded. When sketching from nature, he would expose himself to all weathers, sitting out for hours in the rain to observe the effect of storms and clouds upon the atmosphere. Death itself was believed to have been hastened by a cold he caught while painting in the damp air.<sup>3</sup> He ‘usually,’ says the biographer in the ‘Gentleman's Magazine,’ ‘finished the greater part of his drawing on the spot,’ and ‘when he had made a sketch at any place, he never wished to quit it until he had given it all the proper tints.’ But one of his modes of study on the Thames, he being a great lover of river scenery, was to be carried up and down on a barge, sketching as it floated along.<sup>4</sup> In Miller's *Turner and Girtin's Picturesque Views* there is a woodcut tailpiece representing Girtin sketching from nature. He sits upon a three-legged folding-stool in an easy attitude, his body thrown back and his feet forward. He wears Hessian boots and a tall beaver hat, and seems to be drawing with a pencil on a bit of paper folded loosely as one would turn back, in reading it, the pages of a pamphlet. This paper he holds in his left hand, which rests upon his knee. The place may be in a park, or by the Thames. There is at the back a piece of water with a swan upon it.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 83.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Miss Hog and C. Varley.

<sup>4</sup> *Idem, ex rel.* T. C. Girtin.

As to his studio work, 'one who had frequently watched his progress tells us,' say Messrs. Redgrave, 'that his finely coloured compositions were wrought with much study, and proportionate manual exertion, and that though he did not hesitate, nor undo what he had once done, for he worked on principle, yet he reiterated his tints to produce splendour and richness, and repeated his depths to secure transparency of tones, with surprising perseverance.'<sup>1</sup> He is also said to have destroyed a vast number of drawings; for if he made a mistake in any of the tints, he would throw the drawing away. Glover, it seems, did the same.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jenkins remarks that 'no greater proof could be advanced of the extreme timidity with which the early water-colour draftsmen worked. Being unaware of the modes since adopted of taking out unsatisfactory parts of a drawing, they considered the whole spoiled if they did not 'hit upon the tints at once.' This limitation of means may, however, have had the salutary effect of enforcing reliance on mastery of hand, instead of inducing dependence on remedial processes.

Besides the employment he received as a teacher, Girtin was encouraged by the favour of many noble and wealthy patrons, who not only threw open to him their houses and collections of art treasures, but gave work to his pencil. To the names already mentioned are to be added those of Sir George Beaumont; Mr. Lascelles,<sup>3</sup> who noticed him early and gave him the use of his collection; the Hon. Spencer Cowper, 'who had the largest and finest collection of Girtin's drawings of any gentleman of that day;'<sup>4</sup> Lord Hardwicke; the Earl of Mulgrave; General Phipps; the Earl of Buchan; and, most hospitable of all, the Earl of Harewood, who was not only one of his earlier patrons, giving him the advantage of his society and of his picture gallery to form his taste by, but who had a room kept for him at Harewood House, where he lived for long periods together, and made some of his most important drawings.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 391; and see *Library of Fine Arts*, iii. 318.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. *ex relatione* E. Dorrell.

<sup>4</sup> Miller's *Turner and Girtin's Picturesque Views*.

<sup>3</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*.

<sup>5</sup> J. J. MSS.

## CHAPTER II

## GIRTIN AND HIS COMPANIONS

Harris the dealer—Girtin's Sketching Society—Its rules and members—*Francia*—His career—*Cotman*—As 'Thaddeus of Warsaw'—Old artist quarters—*Barker*—Panoramas—Sir R. K. Porter—Battle-pieces—Girtin's view of London—What has become of it?—Turner takes to oils—Becomes A.R.A.

WHILE in the enjoyment of all this direct patronage, and thus, one would think, above the necessity of paying his court to the dealers, it seems curious that Girtin should have been rather inclined to sell his works through their medium than at once to persons who wished to possess them. But such is said to have been the fact,<sup>1</sup> and that many of his drawings passed through the hands of one Harris, a frame-maker of Gerrard Street, Soho, who seems to have found his interest in gathering around him some of the choice spirits of the artist fraternity, in whom the Bohemian element was not wanting.

It is quite possible that Girtin, with his sociable nature, may have enjoyed a chat at 'Jack Harris's tavern club' even, as alleged, with 'that wild reprobate Morland,'<sup>2</sup> but it is more agreeable to picture him as the centre of a social *réunion* of a much more refined description, in which he certainly took part. To him has been assigned the credit of having been the first to form one of the many pleasant sketching coteries which have existed among artists and amateurs from his time to the present. It is not improbable that with him the idea originated of a sociable evening meeting, once a month or so, of friends of artistic proclivities, and more or less brothers of the brush, to indulge their fancy and their taste in a couple of hours' sketching, illustrating in friendly rivalry a given subject; and, likely enough, it was suggested by the recollection of his own profitable evenings in Adelphi Terrace. There have been larger and more distinguished societies of the same kind, but we hear of none of earlier date than

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 399.

<sup>2</sup> Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, p. 66.



that established by Girtin and his comrades a year or two before the close of the eighteenth century.

An interesting minute of the first meeting of the society is preserved at the South Kensington Museum on the back of a drawing in the water-colour collection there, entitled 'A landscape composition; Moonlight,' on which are inscribed the following words and figures: 'This drawing was made on Monday, May the 20th, 1799, at the room of Robert Ker Porter of No. 16 Great Newport Street, Leicester Square, in the very painting room that formerly was Sir Joshua Reynolds's and since has been Dr. Samuel Johnson's; and for the first time on the above day convened, a small and select Society of Young Painters under the title (as I give it) of the Brothers met for the purpose of establishing by practice a school of Historic Landscape, the subjects being original designs from poetick passages;

L<sup>s</sup>. FRANCIA.

'The Society consists of

Worthington,  
J. C. Denham, *Treas*\*,  
R<sup>t</sup> K<sup>r</sup> Porter,  
T<sup>s</sup> Girtin,  
T<sup>s</sup> Underwood,  
G<sup>e</sup> Samuel,  
& L<sup>s</sup> Francia, *Secret*<sup>y</sup>.'

The above minute seems to mean that it was Francia, not Girtin, who actually founded the Society.

This FRANÇOIS LOUIS THOMAS FRANCIA, which appears to be his full name, though he is generally known as 'Louis Francia' simply, was one of Girtin's fellow-students at Dr. Monro's. He was a Frenchman, believed to have been born at Calais in 1772,<sup>1</sup> and therefore a little older than Girtin. He is chiefly known in bold, moving sea-pieces, but he painted on shore also, and with a power, and an eye for broadly massed composition and mellowness of

<sup>1</sup> The usual biographers do not tell us much about 'Louis Francia,' and what little they have to say is contradictory and not all to his credit. Pilkington, having in a decisive way placed his birth within the present century, sets him down as Girtin's pupil. Now, whether we give the year 1800 to this century or to the last (a question much discussed at that era), Francia could not, on the above theory, have been quite three years old when Girtin died, and his precocity must have equalled that of the infant in the 'Bab Ballads' who died 'an old dotard' at the age of five. And moreover he was, as we see, secretary to 'the Brothers' in May 1799. Redgrave, more definitely and with greater plausibility, tells us that he was born at Calais on 21 Dec., 1772.

colour, so suggestive of Girtin as to have led to his works being sometimes attributed to that master himself. Among some manuscript notes referring to the time we are considering, or a few years earlier, which were furnished to Mr. Jenkins by J. P. Neale, the topographic draftsman, who was four years older than Girtin, there is a casual reference to Francia, as an assistant at a drawing-school in Furnival's Inn Court, Holborn, kept by one J. C. Barrow, where John Varley was also employed. The writer describes him as 'a conceited French refugee, who used to amuse the party with his blundering absurdities.' In the list of subscribers to 'The Works of the late Edward Dayes,' 8vo, 1805, is 'Lewis Francia, Drawing Master, 5 Lower Phillimore Place, Kensington.' Graves notes eighty-five landscapes exhibited by Francia at the Royal Academy between 1795 and 1821. He is also said to have made many drawings for, and as 'painter in water-colours to,' the Duchess of York. And he published the following books of prints: '*Studies of Landscapes* imitated from the originals by L. Francia, 1810,' apparently soft-ground etchings, some designed by himself being excellent suggestions of landscape composition; and four '*Marine Studies* by L. Francia, 1822.' Published by Rodwell and Martin, New Bond Street. Price 2s. in 'C. Hullmandel's Lithography,' with a vignette title. All these are very slight sketches, probably for students to copy. Francia is further mentioned by Redgrave as 'a member and for a time secretary of the Water-Colour Society.' But the body referred to is not the Society whose history these pages are intended specially to record. It was a rival association of which some account will be given in the sequel. According to the same biographer this artist died on the 6th of February 1839, at his native Calais, whither he had returned in 1817, having failed in the preceding year to gain admission to the ranks of the Royal Academy.<sup>1</sup>

Messrs. *Worthington* and *J. C. Denham* appear to have been amateurs. The first was probably Mr. Thomas Worthington, described<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A notice of *Louis Francia, peintre de marine*, by E. Le Beau, is contained in the *Mémoires de la Société d'Agriculture de Calais*, and was printed separately. There have been other artists of the same name (besides the old master Francesco Raibolini, of Bologna). A son of Louis Francia's exhibited pictures at the Royal Academy; and there was a 'Belgian marine painter' of the name of Francia, whose death in September 1884 has been recorded.

<sup>2</sup> By Chambers Hall in a letter to John Pye. He is called W. H. Worthington by Thornbury. There was an engraver and draftsman of that name and those initials but if not born (as Redgrave says) till about 1795, he could not be the man.

as 'a very skilful performer' with the brush, who 'had profited much by' lessons which he for some time received from Girtin. He lived at Halliford on the Thames, and had a collection of that painter's drawings.

*Robert Ker Porter* was a rising artist a few years younger than Girtin, addicted to the big brush, who had already composed 'historical' pictures of ambitious magnitude.

*Thomas Underwood*<sup>1</sup> seems to have been a half amateur water-colour painter who studied at Dr. Monro's, and *George Samuel* an esteemed landscape painter, chiefly in water-colours, who exhibited at the Academy from 1786 to 1823, and had made a hit by a view of the frozen Thames in 1789.

The following were the ways of this little club, which forms the model on which the simple rules of later sketching societies have usually been framed. They met alternately at each other's houses. The subject was generally taken from an English poet, and was treated by each in his own way. The member at whose house they met supplied strained paper, colours, and pencils, and all the sketches of the evening became his property. They met at six o'clock and had tea or coffee, worked till ten, and, after a plain supper, separated at midnight.<sup>2</sup>

Thornbury tells us that the members were ten in number, adding to the seven names recorded by Francia, three more, which, if correctly given, would be *Augustus Wall Callcott*, *P. S. Murray*, and *John Sell Cotman*.<sup>3</sup> *Callcott*, like Ker Porter, was afterwards knighted, when he became a distinguished painter and a Royal Academician. Like him also, he had seen a few less summers than Thomas Girtin. At this time young Callcott was gradually deserting the sister art of music to try his hand at portraiture, his true bent of landscape not having yet declared itself. It is more than possible that his evening amusement in Tom Girtin's genial company had something to do

<sup>1</sup> Probably the 'R. T. Underwood' mentioned in Redgrave's *Dictionary*. Thornbury calls him 'S. R. Underwood.' There is a plate of 'Roche Rocks and Chapel, Cornwall,' by 'J. R. Underwood,' in *Beauties of England and Wales*, ii. 517, dated 1802. In Dr. Percy's *Salé Catalogue* he is 'T. R. Underwood.'

<sup>2</sup> Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, 66; *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 316.

<sup>3</sup> In the late Dr. Percy's collection of drawings, sold at Christie's in April 1890, was a set of seven of the subject, *An Ancient Castle*, by Callcott, Cotman, Girtin, Murray, Porter, Samuel, and Underwood. It is said that Turner refused to join the society because the host was allowed to have the drawings for his own. (See 'Thomas Girtin,' by F. G. Kitton, in the *Art Journal* for Nov. 1887.)



with its recognition. *Murray* was, it is believed, one more amateur. But the third additional name demands a fuller notice. He was another of Dr. Monro's clients, and one of the many who became distinguished as a professional artist in after life.

JOHN SELL COTMAN was also Girtin's junior, and must have been one of the youngest members of the sketching club. In a yet distant chapter he will have to be dealt with as an Associate of the Water-Colour Society. At the time now referred to, he was a struggling student, who had just shaken himself free of the paternal draper's shop life at Norwich, under an artistic impulse not to be controlled.

Some of his early adventures in London, while trying to live by his pencil, have been recorded, doubtless with some embellishment, by a once well-known pen. Ker Porter used, not unfrequently, to bring his sister Jane to the meetings of the sketching club, whereat she was sometimes permitted to select themes for the evening's drawings.<sup>1</sup> It is said that Cotman related to her these incidents of his life, and that she afterwards embodied them in that of the hero of her first romance, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, published in 1803.<sup>2</sup> There she relates how Thaddeus (an imaginary descendant of Sobieski, whose character she based on that of Kosciuszko<sup>3</sup>), being an exile in England after the subjugation of Poland, and finding himself penniless, had recourse to drawing in order to raise the needful. For 'Thaddeus of Warsaw' read 'Cotman of Norwich,' and the story is his, though the aristocratic traits of character introduced are far from being appropriate. 'He found,' writes the novelist, 'that his sole dependence must rest on his talents for painting. Of this art he had always been remarkably fond; and his taste easily perceived that there were many drawings exhibited for sale much inferior to those which he had executed for mere amusement. He decided at once; and purchasing . . . pencils and Indian ink, he set to work.' With these materials he executes half a dozen drawings, 'recollections of scenes in Germany,' and takes them to a print-shop in Great Newport Street,<sup>4</sup> where a dealer, declaring such things to be mere drugs, offers him

<sup>1</sup> Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, 68.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS. *ex relatione* Mr. J. B. Tootal.

<sup>3</sup> *Thaddeus Kosciuszko* lived in what had been Hogarth's house, the south-east corner of Leicester Square, where Archbishop Tenison's school now stands. (Hare's *Walks in London*, ii. 127.)

<sup>4</sup> Henry Richter, who was born in Great Newport Street in 1772, told Mr. Jenkins that, in his early days, this was the only street in London in which there was a printseller's.

a guinea for the six, but so offends his dignity by calling him a 'conceited dauber,' that he walks off in high dudgeon with the roll of drawings under his arm. Reduced to greater necessity, he afterwards goes again to the same street, and offers the drawings for a guinea at another shop there, where a more conscientious dealer not only buys them at once, but requests him to furnish six more every week. How much of the experiences of the imaginary Count Sobieski are to be placed to the credit of this excellent painter of the Norwich school, it is impossible to say, but there is at any rate some historic reality in the scene wherein the authoress lays this portion of her plot. Her pages take us back to the little artists' quarter about Leicester Square and Covent Garden, as it existed in the days of her own young-ladyhood, where the Porters and Girtin and many of their painter friends lived during the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

It is still possible to trace some of their familiar haunts; but the district has been carved up for wider streets; old sites are overlaid with model lodging houses, new theatres and music-halls, bigger shops, art galleries, and co-operative stores; and its former outlines are almost blotted out. Even the name 'Trafalgar Square' would have had no meaning in the days here spoken of. The year 1794, during the hard winter whereof Miss Porter brings her noble refugee to the Hummums in Covent Garden, was known in naval annals by an earlier triumph than Nelson's, that of Admiral Lord Howe, on its 'glorious First of June.' 'St. Martin's noble church,' she says, 'was then the centre of the east side of a long, narrow, and somewhat dirty lane of mean houses, particularly in the end below the church. Charing Cross with its adjoining streets showed nothing better than plain tradesmen's shops; and it was not until we saw the Admiralty and entered the Horse Guards that anything presented itself worthy of the great name of London.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1798 Girtin was living, as before stated, at 25 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden. Close by, on the south, between that street and Maiden Lane, lay Hand Court, where Turner lurked within his modest studio. Porter had removed from Bedford Street (No. 38), where he was in 1794, just round the corner westward, to 16 Newport Street, the very street in which Cotman (or Count Sobieski) found the first market for his drawings. It is a dirty little back street now (if indeed it exists at all), nearly lost among new buildings, but

<sup>1</sup> *Thaddæus of Warsaw*, edit. 1831, p. 110 n.

at that time it formed part of the nearest coachway from Lincoln's Inn to Piccadilly. Somewhat further on is Lisle Street, where, at the large house fronting Leicester Street, Leicester Square, had been exhibited, in 1781, the Eidophusikon of Louthembourg; and to the north whereof is Gerrard Street, haunted with the shades of Jack Harris and the literary and artistic frequenters of the old 'Turk's Head.' The Cranbourn Street (or 'Alley') where Hogarth served his apprenticeship to a silversmith's engraver, had not yet, nor long after, given place to the thoroughfare which now bears that name; and Garrick Street is of still more recent date. The direct communication between Covent Garden and Leicester Square was by footways through a labyrinth of paved courts, some of which still exist. Westward of, and not quite in a line with Great Newport Street, lies (or lay) Little Newport Street; and there, at No. 1, resided at one time (possibly at this) our painter's younger brother John, who carried on business as a letter and heraldic engraver, and was employed in that capacity as assistant at the Bank of England. From the point of junction of the two Newport Streets, there still runs, or very lately ran, northward, a small street called Porter Street (whether named or not from the family above mentioned, this deponent cannot say), and southward, parallel to St. Martin's Lane, and between it and Leicester Square, one out of many streets in central London called Castle Street. Formerly it extended to Charing Cross, but it is now curtailed by the National Gallery.<sup>1</sup> On the west side of Castle Street lived John Hunter, the great comparative anatomist; and nearly opposite, at No. 28, another of the little circle of artist friends in which Tom Girtin moved.

This was HENRY ASTON BARKER, a painter without mention of whose name and life's work no complete account can be given of the development of that topographic art upon which our water-colour school was originally based, and which in the days of its earlier maturity still constituted its main support. His father, Robert Barker, has the credit of inventing, as well as founding, in 1793, the popular exhibition in the north-east corner of Leicester Square, well remembered as one of the delights of their youth by elders of the living generation, under the name of 'the Panorama.'

<sup>1</sup> Since this paragraph was written, Porter Street, even Castle Street itself, and nearly all that it inherited, have dissolved, to make room for Charing Cross Road.



The succession of these wondrous cylindric views, in the centre whereof the spectator stood, as one transported, by a genius of Araby, into some distant land, or seemed encompassed by the reality of a scene which he had already striven in vain to visualize in his mind's eye, was for a long series of years an equal source of pleasure and profitable instruction to countless persons of all ages.

Although, as already mentioned, the idea of a continuous picture, including the whole circle of the horizon, is said to have occurred to Sir George Beaumont when he saw Barret's wall-decorations at Norbury Park, and to have even been put by him to an experimental test, it was to Robert Barker, who conceived a similar idea independently, that the public were eventually indebted for this interesting kind of exhibition. But his younger son, Henry Aston Barker, was his principal assistant in the execution of the scheme. It was he who went out sketching, at home and abroad, and virtually he who designed all the earlier panoramic views.

Young Barker was not more than a year older than Girtin. He had come to London from Scotland in or shortly before 1789, with his father (an Irishman of county Meath), and they brought with them a view, representing Edinburgh from Calton Hill, with Holyrood House in the foreground. It had already been exhibited in that city and in Glasgow, and had excited much interest as a proof that it was possible to depict a portion of a scene embracing more than sixty degrees of the horizon. It was not, indeed, a complete panorama in the true sense of the word, for it included no more than one-half of the entire circle; but all the difficulties of perspective had been surmounted. The sketches for this picture had been made by Henry Aston Barker, then a lad of about fourteen; and his father, who had invented a mechanical system of perspective, and taught that art in Edinburgh, had pieced the sketches together and adapted them to a concave surface. Mr. Barker met with liberal encouragement from a Scotch nobleman (believed to have been Lord Elcho, son of the Earl of Wemyss), and, on coming to London, was thereby enabled to exhibit this picture in a large room at No. 28 Haymarket.

He placed his son Henry in the schools of the Royal Academy, where he and Turner and Robert Ker Porter<sup>1</sup> are said to have been

<sup>1</sup> See an account of 'Bob Porter' in the schools, insisting on adding a helmet and sword to the *Gladiator* (*Somerset House Gazette*, i. 364).

'great companions and confederates in boyish mischief.' Henry Barker is moreover reported to have had a boyish attachment to his friend Porter's lively and romantic sister, Miss Jane, the authoress above quoted. But Barker was also fond of work. He was an early riser like Turner, and used to emulate the industry of John Hunter,<sup>1</sup> over the way, in Castle Street. Get up, however, as early as he would, there the first thing he always saw was the great anatomist, poring over his preparations.

The success of their 'Edinburgh' induced the Barkers to execute another painting of the kind in London, and this time to creep round another quarter of the circle. For this, Henry Barker made a number of drawings<sup>2</sup> from the top of the Albion Mills, a lofty structure at the eastern corner of the Surrey side of Blackfriars Bridge.<sup>3</sup> When finished, this three-quarter circle picture was exhibited in 1792, in a rough building, apparently not erected for the purpose, at the back of Barker's house in Castle Street, and 'abutting on the *Apollonicon Rooms*' in St. Martin's Lane. Sir Joshua Reynolds went to see the picture there, and praised it highly.<sup>4</sup> It only remained to complete the whole circumference of the horizon; but for that it was necessary to have a cylindrical room specially adapted to the purpose. This was effected in the following year, when the house in Leicester Square, with its two circles (to which a third was added long afterwards), was erected by subscription, from the designs of Robert Mitchell, of Newman Street,<sup>5</sup> and opened, by Robert Barker, under the name, then first adopted, of ΠΑΝΟΡΑΜΑ. The pictures of Edinburgh and London had been executed in distemper; but the paintings here were in oil. On the death of his father, in 1806, Henry Barker carried on the concern. He afterwards went to live in West Square, St. George's Fields, Southwark, where he painted his panorama pictures in a wooden rotunda. He also travelled much about the world, making sketches for them. He died in 1856.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Hunter's house in Leicester Square, where he first began, in 1785, to collect his museum, was next to the Alhambra, to the south, between it and Hogarth's. (*Hare's Walk in London*, ii. 127.) The back may have looked upon Castle Street.

<sup>2</sup> These drawings were at the same time etched by H. A. Barker, the shading was coarsely aquatinted by F. Birnie, and the whole were published in six sheets, about 22 inches by 17. They are dated 1792 and 1793.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 152.

<sup>4</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* J. Masey Wright.

<sup>5</sup> He published an account, with delineations of the building, in 1800.

<sup>6</sup> For many of the above facts see obituary notice of H. A. Barker in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

These comprehensive landscapes of their friend Barker's seem to have raised in the hearts both of Porter and Girtin a desire to execute works of a similar kind. The former, some years later, applied the plan to 'historical' painting, and exhibited at the Lyceum<sup>1</sup> three large battle-pieces, the first (in 1799) representing the storming of Seringapatam, which was followed by the siege of Acre, and (in 1801) the battle of Alexandria. These were carried round three quarters of the circle. Another was the battle of Agincourt.

Battle-pieces have always been favourite subjects with the painters of panoramas. Barker's invention was introduced into Paris, where a panorama, in a building erected by the American engineer Robert Fulton (the inventor of the steamboat) was opened in 1779 with a view of the Place de la Concorde. Other views of the kind having proved very attractive in that city, the Emperor Napoleon attempted, as a means of making himself popular, to establish panoramas in every quarter, exhibiting the victories of the French armies, and he 'gave orders to his architect, Cellierier, to draw out the plans of seven panoramas to be erected in the then open space now filled up by the Palais de l'Industrie, but the military events of 1812 turned his attention from the design.'<sup>2</sup> Even Barker's panorama in Leicester Square opened with a view of the 'Grand Fleet at Spithead.' This kind of exhibition has been revived in recent years in Paris and in London, and the pictures have again been in most cases representations of scenes in modern warfare, a noteworthy exception being that of Niagara, now exhibiting at Westminster, which gives an adequate idea of what the old cylindrical pictures were.

Girtin's so-called 'panorama' was of the peaceful order. It was one of 'London,' said to have been painted in his twenty-third year,<sup>3</sup> that is, in 1797-8, and so nearly the same in subject and other circumstances as Barker's, that much confusion has arisen between them. Like his, it was taken from the Surrey side of the river and the foot of Blackfriars Bridge, from the top either of the Albion Mills, or (according to another account)<sup>4</sup> Sir Ashton Leaver's Museum. Its horizon is said to have been semicircular. We are not told what its

<sup>1</sup> The Lyceum was a great exhibition room in the Strand, where the theatre of that name now stands. It was originally built for the accommodation of the Incorporated Society of Artists, which removed thither from Spring Gardens in 1773. See below.

<sup>2</sup> *Galignani's Messenger*, 13 September, 1881.

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, 399.

<sup>4</sup> John Pye's MSS.



size was. It must, however, have had a very real look, and have contained figures; for a writer in *Notes and Queries*<sup>1</sup> says of it: 'I remember when a boy going to see that panorama. I was struck with the baker knocking at the door in Albion Place, and wondered the man did not move.' In one of these views of London (it is not clear whether Girtin's or Barker's) there was represented on the Thames the Lord Mayor's procession by water to Westminster, which used then to take place on the 9th of November. As there is no such incident in Barker and Birnie's prints, though boats are there introduced on the river, the probability is that it was Girtin who made a feature of the City barges.

Girtin's 'London' was exhibited in Spring Gardens, and on view there at the time of his death.<sup>2</sup> After that event it appears to have lain rolled up in a loft over a carpenter's shop in St. Martin's Lane (Thornbury says, at an architect's named Howitt), and 'about the year 1825' to have been sold by the second husband<sup>3</sup> of Girtin's widow, one Mr. Cohen, to 'some persons in Russia,' or to 'a Russian nobleman,' who carried it off to that country. According to one statement,<sup>4</sup> it was exhibited in St. Petersburg. The picture itself may turn up again, some fine day; but in the mean time there are materials from which a fair conjecture may be made as to what it is, or was, like. The outline of the work is<sup>5</sup> in the possession of Miss Miller; and several of the original studies for it, 'very admirably drawn and painted,'<sup>6</sup> are in the collection of Girtin's drawings formed by the late Mr. Chambers Hall, and now in the British Museum.

It has been stated that Girtin's 'panorama' was executed in oil. But an examination of these studies, when in Mr. Hall's possession, led Mr. Jenkins to doubt the correctness of this assertion. They are, he writes, 'splashed with colour, which Mr. Hall stated to be distemper. They have all the appearance of having been soiled while being used in the progress of painting the panorama. This circumstance' he regards as throwing 'some doubt upon' the above statement, 'and taken in conjunction with the fact that Girtin painted some scenes for a pantomime at Covent Garden and consequently

<sup>1</sup> First series, vol. iv. p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Obituary notice in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. MSS. *ex relatione* Miss Hog.

<sup>4</sup> Pye's MSS.

<sup>5</sup> Or was. See *Catalogue of the Girtin Exhibition at the Burlington Fine Arts Club*, 1875 (page 7 n), to which collection Miss Miller contributed many fine drawings of the master's.

<sup>6</sup> J. J. J.

must have been acquainted with the use of distemper' leads him to consider it 'probable that the panorama was also executed in that material,' the quality of which is, in that writer's opinion, 'so much better suited for the purpose than the glare of oil.'

Girtin did, it is true, at the latter end of his life, paint a few, but very few, pictures in oil, besides the doubtful panorama. His son told Mr. Jenkins that there were only two, and Miss Hog, an intimate friend of the painter's wife, further said that two large views by him of Harewood House were in oil. But the last picture he exhibited, namely 'Bolton Bridge, Yorkshire,' at the Royal Academy in 1801, was in that medium. It was much noticed at the time,<sup>1</sup> and is mentioned in Mr. Redford's List of Art Sales, as having been sold in 1803, for 25*l.* 4*s.* It is possible, as has been alleged, that Girtin painted these oil-pictures with a view of gaining admission to the Royal Academy, where the claims of water-colour draftsmen to be regarded as 'painters' were not recognized.

His early companion and fellow-student, Turner, though still supporting himself by making topographic drawings, and at the same time continuing to develop the resources of water-colour art, had for some years past been exhibiting oil-pictures as the means by which he hoped to achieve fame as a great artist. This ambition was doomed to be for a long time bitterly disappointed; but he at least obtained by them his admission to the Academy, as an Associate, in 1799; in which year he set up his studio in a more genteel quarter, at 64 Harley Street, and left for ever the old historic neighbourhood about Covent Garden.

<sup>1</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine.*

## CHAPTER III

## THE LAST YEARS OF GIRTIN

Girtin's marriage—Moves to St. George's Row—Studio frequented—Playful letters—Fatal illness—Goes to France—His Paris sketches—Etched and aquatinted—Originals at Woburn—Pantomime scenes—Barker in Paris—Girtin's death and burial—His private character—Aspersed by Dayes—Defended by family—Contrasted with Turner's.

THE time was near at hand for Girtin, too, to make a westward move. On the 16th of October, 1800, he took to himself a wife. His bride was Miss Mary Ann Borrett, only daughter of Phineas Borrett, an eminent goldsmith of good property, and a liveryman of the Goldsmiths' Company, who resided at No. 11 Scott's Place, Islington. They were married by license at the church of St. George's, Hanover Square. The entry in the parish register states that the bride was a minor, and that the marriage was 'with consent of her father,' who together with 'Ann Borrett' sign their names as witnesses of the ceremony. The 'happy pair' went to reside at St. George's Row,<sup>1</sup> only a few doors from old Paul Sandby's.

That veteran painter was now about seventy-five. During the whole of Girtin's life he had been living there; and there he was to live on until seven years after Girtin's death, when he died also. He had a studio at the back, abutting on the burial ground behind, where his body is interred.<sup>2</sup> But the day of Sandby's art was at length gone by. There was a greater attraction than any he could now offer, in the sight of our lively and dashing young painter at his work in the studio close at hand. Girtin's house was the resort of many persons of distinction in society, and all who came were shown up into the painting-room. Here, surrounded by callers, the artist would go on

<sup>1</sup> At No. 2, or according to Pye 'No. 9.' (MSS.)

<sup>2</sup> There was exhibited at the Nottingham Museum in 1884 a view by Sandby of the cemetery in which his studio appears. A bistre drawing by Girtin of St. George's Row, formerly in Dr. Percy's collection, is now at the British Museum. The house with a shade over the window was Sandby's. (*Percy Catalogue*.)



with his work, chatting and telling anecdotes at the same time; liberal, as on all occasions, of his knowledge of art. Lady Gower, and doubtless Lady Long, were frequent visitors. The young man's father-in-law, with a closer eye than his to business, was inclined to complain of the professional imprudence of permitting artists so frequently to see him paint. But Girtin's art was not of the kind that is fabricated in studios.

He still made long visits to the country, and spent much of his time at Lord Essex's and Lord Harewood's. During absence from home he used to write pretty and playful letters to his wife and her mother, often in an easy kind of verse, and very witty and amusing. He put scraps of poetry, too, under his drawings. These letters his widow unfortunately destroyed, burning them by mistake, with a box of others, at the time of her second marriage.

All this happy life was soon, however, to come to an end; for a fatal illness, which terminated Girtin's short career, had begun to develop rapidly. Whether or not he was, as it has been reported, afflicted with asthma or consumption, the disease which finally caused his death is believed to have been ossification of the heart. His health had visibly been failing since the year before his marriage; and in 1801 his condition became so alarming that a change of climate was deemed necessary. Lord Harewood, writing to him on the 27th of June, about some drawings which he had been making of Harewood, says: 'I received your letter this morning, and am sorry to hear that you are under the necessity of going to another climate for the benefit of your health.' He was advised to try the Cape of Good Hope or Madeira; but his illness gaining upon him, many of his friends persuaded him not to go so far away, and he went no farther than Paris.

For this an opportunity now offered itself. The preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens were signed on the 1st of October, 1801, and that occasion of a visit to the Continent, which had been closed during the time of war, was embraced by him, as it was by so many of his countrymen. At first, however, it required considerable interest to be allowed to go to Paris, particularly in the case of English artists. This was exerted on Girtin's behalf by one of his numerous friends and patrons, the above-mentioned Sir Charles Long, who was at that time Under Secretary of State.

The following letter, however, dated 'October 17th, 1801,' seems

to show that he did not even then contemplate leaving England :  
'To Mr. Harrison at Ald<sup>n</sup> Boydells. Friend Harrison,—I am so very ill that I am advised to go into the country for a little while. I shall desire a person to call upon you if in case you should have occasion for anything who will attend to my business during my absence. If you will have the goodness to send what orders you may want to my mother Mrs. Vaughan,<sup>1</sup> Duke Street, Little Britain, she will take care to let the person know. I'm sorry to hear you have been ill. I hope your better. Yours respectfully,

'T. GIRTIN.

'Drury Lane 56.'<sup>2</sup>

Girtin went to Paris in November of the same year, 1801, his brother John, it is said, lending him 100*l.* for the purpose. There was inducement enough to visit the French capital at this time, without the excuse of ill health. He derived, indeed, no bodily benefit from the change ; on the contrary, he was found to be much worse when he returned home. While in Paris, however, as well as in one or two of the towns he passed through,<sup>3</sup> 'he executed a large number of sketches, which for boldness betokened no decay of power,' and are reckoned as in some respects his best works. For convenience, and possibly in prudence also, as the Parisians were said to be jealous of sketching, particularly by foreigners, he took all the views which he made during his residence in Paris, from the windows of a carriage which he engaged for his daily drives. In this fashion 'he recorded,' says Pye, 'in a number of sketches the first impressions of his mind on seeing the great features of that remarkable city.'<sup>4</sup> But he found himself lonely and solitary in Paris ; and no wonder. He had had to go alone, for his young wife was within a month of her confinement. She went to stay with her parents at Islington, and their child was born on the 10th of December, during the father's absence abroad. His health still declining, Girtin returned to England in May 1802. He had then but six months to live ; and

<sup>1</sup> Girtin's mother had married a Mr. Vaughan, a pattern-drawer. Miller, in *Turner and Girtin's Picturesque Views*, assuming that the marriage took place shortly after her first husband's death, conjectures that both Girtin and Turner derived from this stepfather their introduction to art. Possibly this was the Thomas Vaughan mentioned by Ottley, in his supplement to *Bryan*, p. 149, as residing in Spitalfields, and the master of Robert Seymour the caricaturist.

<sup>2</sup> From an autograph lately in the collection of Mr. W. V. Morten.

<sup>3</sup> Miller's *Turner and Girtin's Picturesque Views*.

<sup>4</sup> *Notes on Turner's 'Liber Studiorum,'* p. 47 n.

these he employed in making for Lord Essex a series of drawings from his Paris sketches, and putting the subjects into a form suitable for reproduction through the press.

The views were drawn in outline, and etched on soft ground by Girtin himself. A set of impressions were taken from the plates, and upon these he put in the effects in colour, and so converted them into the drawings for the aquatint engravers. The drawings, twenty in number, were purchased from the artist by the Earl of Essex, and were in that nobleman's possession when the work was published. His Lordship afterwards presented them to the Duke of Bedford.<sup>1</sup> Besides so preparing this selection of his sketches for publication, the artist painted two of them on a large scale as scenes for Covent Garden Theatre. One was a view of the Conciergerie for a pantomime by Thomas Dibdin (writer of the celebrated 'Mother Goose, of Grimaldi's palmy days), and the other was the Rue St. Denis.<sup>2</sup> During the Peace of Amiens, Henry Barker also went to Paris, and drew a panorama of that city. It is remarkable that the two artists should thus for a second time have been engaged in tasks so similar.

Poor Girtin never went back with his wife to their bright dwelling in Hyde Park. During this last sad period of his life they resided at her father's house in Islington; and he had painting-rooms at one Norman's, a frame-maker's in the Strand, where he worked on till the pencil literally dropped from his weakened grasp. There was still an

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Jenkins, in a note dated 5 November, 1853, states that he saw these drawings in the hands of Mr. John Pye, the engraver, who was writing a little account of Girtin to append to the work, and adds: 'They are exquisitely drawn and tinted, and the gradations which give space admirably managed.' In an earlier memorandum, dated 11 January, 1852, he relates that Mr. Pye, some time before, when going over the Library of Woburn Abbey, with the librarian, Mr. John Martin, discovered these same drawings there, they having previously been supposed by the custodian to be coloured prints. He also states that Mr. Pye 'copied some of these drawings and consequently became well acquainted with them.' Mr. Pye is not known to have completed this promised account of Girtin. The manuscript notes by him respecting that painter, which have occasionally been cited in these pages, appear to have been made with a view to a more comprehensive work projected by him, but left quite in embryo, on the history of painting in Great Britain, and the influence thereon of Turner as well as Girtin.

<sup>2</sup> The *Rue St. Denis* is one of the most effective in the engraved series. The street leading to the arch is filled with carts and foot-passengers, and wonderfully conveys the air of a bustling metropolitan thoroughfare. There was in the collection of Archdeacon Burney, and afterwards in that of Dr. Percy, a fine coloured drawing by Girtin of the same subject (measuring 15 $\frac{3}{4}$  by 19 $\frac{3}{4}$  inches), in which the houses are carried up much higher, and there are no figures or carts. It looks like a sketch made on the spot, and it may have been used for the scene at Covent Garden. It was bought at the Percy sale, 17 April, 1890, by Messrs. Colnaghi & Co., for twenty-three guineas. Another fine view of the arch, taken in flank, is in the South Kensington National Collection.



idea of sending him abroad, in the vain hope of restoring his health ; as appears from the following letter from Sir George Beaumont, referring apparently to the projected publication of the Paris views : 'Dear Sir,—I have just received your letter at this place. The pleasure I feel at your successful labours is much alloyed by the indifferent account you give of your health. You must take care of yourself, and I hope you will be enabled so to settle your concerns that you may pass the winter in Madeira. You will there find ample materials for your pencil, and the air is the most salubrious in the world. I have no doubt but you will secure good impressions for me ; and if you will send me a line to let me know you receive this, I will return you a note for the money. If you write by the return of the post, I shall receive it here, otherwise direct to me at W. Aston, Woodstock. Lady Beaumont joins with me in best wishes for your success, and the return of your health.—I am, dear Sir, your sincere well wisher, G. W. BEAUMONT.—Cheltenham, Octr. 25th, 1802, or at Oldfield Bowles, Esqre., W. Aston, Woodstock.'

But Girtin had set out on a longer journey. He could not wait to select artists' proofs for his friend and patron. A fortnight after, when his wife was with him one night in the studio, he died. It was the 9th of November, Lord Mayor's day. The crowd, that had come out to view the City pageant, swept by under the now darkened window ; and admiring visitors to the show-room in Spring Gardens had to be told next day that the hand which made that pageant live again in the view they had come to gaze on, would wield a brush no more.

The loss which had been sustained by Girtin's death was testified by a group of patrons and admirers who followed his remains to the grave. Among them were the artists Sir William Beechey, Sir Georgé Beaumont, Hearne, Edridge, and Turner. He was buried in the old familiar quarter ; in the churchyard of St. Paul's, Covent Garden, on the south side of the burial ground to the left of the paved path to Bedford Street. In 1803—by whom it is not known, some say by Turner—a neat monumental stone was erected there, with the inscription, 'Sacred to the memory of Thomas Girtin, Artist, who departed this life Nov. the 9th, 1802, aged 27 years.' It is gone now, and Miller<sup>1</sup> says that the grave, 'just beyond the second tree,' is marked by 'a flat stone, which bears neither name nor date.' But he prints a

<sup>1</sup> *Turner and Girtin's Picturesque Views*, p. xliv.

woodcut of a stone fragment, with an urn and festoons upon it carved over the above words. 'This,' he says, 'was once propped up near the grave.' It looks like part of an upright headstone, and its design does not seem to support his theory that it originally lay, like the present stone, flat upon the ground.

It is just to add a few words respecting Girtin's private character, on which some cruel aspersions were cast in a short notice of him written by his jealous master, Edward Dayes, and published in 1805 in a posthumous series of *Professional Sketches of Modern Artists*, which the author had left in manuscript. They have been repeated by other writers<sup>1</sup> on, apparently, no better foundation. After duly warning young persons not to 'suffer their passions to overpower their reason' so as to 'destroy existence,' and ending his moral reflections with the back-handed compliment to his too clever pupil, 'Had he not trifled away a vigorous constitution he might have arrived at a very high degree of excellence as a landscape painter,' poor Dayes, with the irony of fate, laid violent hands on himself, and put an end to his own life.

Inferences to support this charge of intemperance, and that Girtin's death was hastened by excess, have been drawn from his associating with George Morland. Assuming it to be true, however, as stated, that these two painters once made a voyage together in a collier, and that Girtin supped not unfrequently with Harris the dealer, where Morland supped also, it is not a necessary deduction that he was a partaker of Morland's vices. They were not 'boys together;' for Morland was twelve years older than Girtin. That Girtin appreciated Morland's genius may indeed be inferred from an anecdote related by Dawe, who tells us<sup>2</sup> that a print of the latter artist's 'Mail Coach in a Storm' was 'highly admired by Girtin, who, having been requested to make a companion to it, after studying it for some time, threw down his pencil, exclaiming that he could do nothing like it.'<sup>3</sup> But neither of Morland's biographers, Dawe or Collins, even mentions a companionship between them. The acquaintance may possibly have been made through John Raphael Smith (older still by another eleven years), under whom, as we know, Girtin

<sup>1</sup> See *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 66, 82; *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 315, 319; &c.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Morland*, 200 n.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Henderson had a copy by Girtin after a picture of Morland's called 'Dogs hesitating about the Pluck,' which copy, as usual, was impressed with his own originality. See *Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue*, 1875, No. 127 (Girtin Exhibition).

used to colour prints. Smith was a sporting buck, but a kind and generous man notwithstanding. The 'Morland Gallery' was one of his best speculations.

The alleged dissipation was wholly denied by Girtin's family and their friends, and their story of the sea voyage bears a purely innocent aspect. It was that Girtin once made an excursion to Scotland in company with George Morland, that they performed their passage by sea, and, in order to observe character and sketch the sailors, took up their position in the men's cabin. This love of the picturesque was converted by the detractors of Thomas Girtin into a love of low society and intemperate habits; and the fact of Morland's having been his companion may have tended to confirm the impression. His family indeed represented him as being far more abstemious<sup>1</sup> than most young men of his day, and even asserted that he was a water-drinker. As to social inclination, they attributed to him an acquired relish for the refined society which he had enjoyed in the company of his noble patrons, which led him to declare, 'with a touch of affectation,' says Mr. Jenkins, 'excusable in so young a man,' that he had a dislike for all other society.<sup>2</sup> John Pye writes, that Girtin's wife was 'extremely angry' at the report of his being fond of low company, as he 'disliked it exceedingly, and was on the contrary too fond of refined society to enjoy that of the illiterate and vulgar. He lived so much with his superiors in rank and station that, she says, it gave him a distaste for the middle classes, who were not at that time so well educated as of later years. But he never slighted old companions and friends.'

Point has been given to the story of Girtin's intemperance and dissipation by drawing a contrast with the career of Turner,<sup>3</sup> and a moral lesson has been derived from the allegation that Girtin shortened his days by a loose course of living, while Turner prolonged his life by better regulated habits. But such evidence as there is rather points to the conclusion that Girtin was temperate, married respectably, and died (of heart disease) universally beloved; and that Turner, though he lived to be an old man, was not averse to low society, being himself unpolished and illiterate, and rather fond of tipling,

<sup>1</sup> 'My father was almost ascetically temperate, and his taste always inclined to the refined and elegant.' (Girtin's son, quoted by Thornbury in *Life of Turner*, second edition, p. 61.)

<sup>2</sup> Miss Hog to Mr. Jenkins.

<sup>3</sup> See Dayes's account of Turner in his *Professional Sketches*.



and that he died in churlish seclusion, attended only by one of his mistresses, a woman of no cultivation, but the sole intimate friend he cared to have about him.

'Generous and giddy' are the epithets more fairly applied by Peter Pindar (Dr. Wolcott) to his 'early acquaintance, Tom Girtin.' He was considered by all who knew him, to be a most delightful companion, and was generous and noble-minded even to a fault,<sup>1</sup> 'with little consciousness,' says Leslie,<sup>2</sup> 'of his own great merit.'

John Pye, to whom it was always a strong recommendation to be a good man of business, writes of him that his principal failing was 'great carelessness in money matters. When he had money he could not keep it if any one wanted it.' Mrs. Borrett said 'she one day heard a poor artist telling him a tale of misery, and Girtin, having no money at the time, gave him a beautiful drawing for which he had refused twenty guineas.' She and her husband 'always spoke of him as one of the kindest and best of men.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J.

<sup>2</sup> *Handbook for Young Painters*, 266.

<sup>3</sup> Pye's MSS.

## CHAPTER IV

## GIRTIN AND TURNER AS CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

Girtin's relations—Publication of the Paris views—Fire at John Girtin's—Chambers Hall and Mr. Jackson—Gifts of Girtin drawings to the British Museum—Turner and Girtin's prices—Turner's 'Norham'—Rival drawings—Turner becomes R.A.—Comparative estimates of art of Turner and Girtin—Their respective influence on the water-colour school—Girtin's on Constable.

GIRTIN, dying so young, left all his near relations as well as his contemporaries in art to survive him, some for many years. His widow, as his mother had done, married again. Her second husband's name was Cohen. Thomas Calvert Girtin, the only child of Thomas Girtin's brief marriage, became a surgeon. He resided at 48 Canonbury Square, Islington, and possessed a valuable collection of his father's drawings. In 1837 he edited a popular little work on human anatomy called 'The House we live in' (founded on an American book of the same name by Dr. Alcott), which has run through many editions. He is mentioned as a 'warm lover of the drama, and an intense admirer' of Samuel Phelps the actor, who when manager of Sadler's Wells Theatre, from 1844 to 1862, was his friend and neighbour in Canonbury Square, and to whom he filled the post of family doctor.<sup>1</sup>

The artist's brother, John the 'letter and heraldic engraver,' also survived him; and after his death took up and published the Paris views, then almost complete. They came out in 1803. The work is entitled: *A Selection of Twenty of the most Picturesque Views in Paris and its Environs*, 'drawn and etched in the year 1802 by the late Thomas Girtin, being the only etchings of that celebrated artist, and aquatinted in exact imitation of the original drawings, in the collection of the R<sup>t</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Earl of Essex.' The finished plates bear imprints with dates from 16 Dec. 1802 to 4 April 1803. But the etchings are variously dated from 16 June to 4 October 1802,

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Samuel Phelps*, by W. M. Phelps and Forbes Robertson (1886), p. 9.

some at 'Islington,' and one at least (4 Aug.) has the imprint 'Drawn etched and Pub<sup>d</sup> by T. Girtin, Scott's Place, Islington.' It has been observed that in the lengthening intervals between the dates one may trace the rapid failing of power to work, in the dying artist.<sup>1</sup>

The aquatint engravers employed to put in the light and shade from the impressions tinted by him were J. C. Lewis, J. B. Harraden, W. Pickett, and J. C. Stadler, the greater number being by J. C. Lewis, who five or six years afterwards engraved in a similar style for Turner the first plate of the *Liber Studiorum*. John Girtin published the Paris views at his house in Little Newport Street.<sup>2</sup> On 'May 16, 1817,' we find the name and address, 'J. Girtin, Engraver, Printer &c. at No. 25 Old Compton Street, 3 doors from Prince's Street, Soho,' in the imprint of a mezzotint portrait, by S. W. Reynolds after Opie, of 'the late extraordinary artist,' Thomas Girtin. After dedicating this plate to 'Sir George Beaumont, Bart.' as 'one of the artist's earliest patrons,' the publisher adds: 'J. Girtin, in the recent fire in Broad Street, having lost all his property excepting some prints &c. which with this portrait of his late brother he respectfully offers to a liberal public.' In the stock thus destroyed by fire it is said that there were some of Thomas Girtin's finest works and many copies of the Paris views, which thus became scarce;<sup>3</sup> and moreover that John Girtin's calamity was not confined to the loss of his house and goods, but that his invalid wife died in his arms as he carried her through the flames.<sup>4</sup> She was the daughter of a Mr. Jackson, a wealthy timber merchant, who seems to have been a queer sort of person. According to his own account, in conversations with Mr. Chambers Hall, who obtained from him some important Girtin drawings, he used to play the patron to his artist nephew-in-law, going about with him and supplying him with money, and promising him good dinners, on condition that he should first make his host a drawing. He showed Mr. Hall a view from the window of the Old Toy inn at Hampton Court, which he said he

<sup>1</sup> Miller and Thornbury. The dates they give are June 16, 18, 25, 28; July 6, 12, 16, 19; August 4, 9, 17; September 2, 29; October 4.

<sup>2</sup> In 1805 the name of 'Mr. Girtin, New Street, Covent Garden,' appears in a list of subscribers to Dayes's works. If this be Thomas Girtin's brother, his subscription was a Christian act. Another neighbouring address, given as that of John Girtin, is 'Castle Street, Leicester Square.' See Thornbury's *Life of Turner*, 2nd edit. p. 70. The title to Ackermann's *Repository*, vol. i. (June 1809) has on it, '*Girtin scr.*'

<sup>3</sup> A copy was sold in Paris—*Vente Danlos*—in December 1880 for 321 francs (about 13*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.*).

<sup>4</sup> *Library of the Fine Arts*, iii. 318.



obtained in this manner. Mr. Hall was under the mistaken impression that this Mr. Jackson was the father, not of Mrs. *John*, but of Mrs. *Tom*, Girtin; and cited his authority for some stories, not, as he made it appear, to his supposed son-in-law's credit; alleging (among other things) that his was a runaway marriage, which has been sufficiently proved above, not to have been so in the artist's case. Possibly he was speaking of John Girtin.

Mr. Hall gave the following account of the manner in which he acquired some of Jackson's stock of Girtin drawings. Having received no answer to a letter which he had written from Southampton to ask the possessor whether he intended to part with any of them, and coming to town about six months after, the intending collector called at Mr. Jackson's. There was a fine carriage at the door, and high words were heard within the house. Mr. Hall knocked. Mr. Jackson was 'not at home.' But he presented himself immediately, saying, 'Yes, I am at home.' A gentleman who had been with him then entered the carriage and drove away. 'I am at home to you,' says Jackson, 'because I used you ill in not replying to your letter. If it had not been for that, I should not have seen you. Do you know who that was who has just left? No? It was the Earl of Essex, who wants my drawings. But I won't part with them. He offended me. He would not take an answer, and so I quarrelled with him and we have been at high words about it.' Mr. Hall, as he was not to be received as a purchaser, begged to be allowed at least to look round the room where the drawings hung. Mr. Jackson pressed him to stay and dine. He did so, and the two struck up an acquaintance, cemented by a second dinner, by special invitation, 'to meet Captain \* \* \*.' After this, Mr. Jackson's affairs became straitened by divers proceedings at law. When two simultaneous Chancery suits had combined to drain the exchequer, Mr. Hall thought the occasion had come for making a fresh attempt. So he ventured to hint that he should be glad to have a drawing or two. To his surprise, Jackson told him that *he* might have whichever he liked. Mr. Hall at once pointed out about five, and, taking them out of their frames, carried them off in triumph. He afterwards acquired more from the same source; and in 1855 presented to the British Museum the collection so made. In 1878 a rich addition was made to the store of Girtin's drawings there, by the bequest by Mr. Henderson of those formerly belonging to his father, Girtin and Turner's old patron, of Adelphi Terrace.

Memoranda preserved by Pye, of what Chambers Hall told him, afford some evidence of the prices charged both by Girtin and Turner for drawings, during their joint life. Mr. Hall used to say that for drawings of the largest size their prices were the same; and he described a fine one of Girtin's (27 by 19 inches in size) representing 'the ruined church of Jedburgh, seen in its full length, the river, in which the building was reflected, flowing between it and the spectator,' and 'near the front, standing in shallow water, and on a sand-bank, female figures washing linen,' for which Mr. Thomas Worthington (above mentioned) paid the artist his highest price, namely six guineas.<sup>1</sup> As this was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1797, in which year Turner made a celebrated drawing of the same class, for which he charged eight guineas, Pye assumes that it must have been made, as that was, the year before it was exhibited—that is to say, in 1796—each painter thus raising his price by two guineas from one year to the next.

Girtin's works must have become more highly esteemed before he died,<sup>2</sup> for, in addition to his mother-in-law's story of his refusing twenty guineas for one, and then giving it to a beggar, the following letter from the Earl of Harewood, dated Harewood House, 27 July, 1801, names the same amount: 'I hope you have made the alterations in the Drawings of this place which I wish'd you to do, and that you have returned them to the house in Hanover Square. I think you said they were to be 20 guineas each. If you will call on Mr. Nelson, Merc<sup>t</sup>, at No. 1 Hylord's Court, Crutched Friars, he will pay you on producing this letter 84 pounds. The frame-maker's bill I will pay when I go to town.'

The drawing of Turner's to which reference is above made was exhibited at Somerset House in 1798, and its exhibition constituted an epoch in that painter's career. Its title was, '*Norham Castle, on the Tweed—Summer's Morn,*' to which the following lines from Thomson's *Seasons* were added in the catalogue:—

But yonder comes the powerful King of Day,  
Rejoicing in the East; the lessening cloud,  
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow  
Illumin'd—his near approach betoken glad.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Worthington made a copy of it, which he presented to Mr. Hall.

<sup>2</sup> The highest prices for drawings by Girtin, recorded in Mr. Redford's *Art Sales*, are 163*l.* 16*s.* for 'Lichfield Cathedral,' in 'Charles Vine' sale, 1873; and 161*l.* 14*s.* for 'The River Exe' in 'Bale' sale, 1881. All others are under 100*l.*

Pye relates<sup>1</sup> that 'a few years before Turner's decease' the painter 'was walking with a friend<sup>2</sup> on the bank of the Tweed, when, Norham Castle within view, Turner stopt and bowed in obeisance.' On his companion's inquiring why he did so, he answered, 'Well I may! It was my drawing of Norham Castle that brought me into public notice.' Perhaps for this reason the subject was one for which he had ever a marked affection. He drew it several times with varying treatment. It was etched by him in the *Liber Studiorum* in 1816, and mezzotinted there, and in the *Rivers of England* in 1824 by Charles Turner. Heath engraved it singly in 1827, and Miller in *Scott's Prose Works* in 1834.

The following account is given by Pye<sup>3</sup> of the origin of this first of the Norham drawings: 'In 1797, when Turner was 22 years of age, Mr. Blake, of Portland Place, commissioned him to make a drawing at the price of 8 guineas, which was [the price for] the largest size then made, whether by Girtin or Turner. The subject of the work was left to Turner's choice, who adapted to his purpose Norham Castle. When Mr. Blake was shown the work, and had been told by Turner that it was made expressly for him, he was loud in expressions of pleasure at having become the proprietor of so beautiful a work. "But," said Turner, "I have been offered 12 guineas for it." Mr. Blake having objected to paying for it more than the sum agreed upon, and also to preventing Turner being the recipient of the larger sum, the work never came into Mr. Blake's possession.' In the following year 1798 the drawing 'Norham Castle' appeared in the Royal Academy exhibition. 'Many years afterwards the public were reminded of the work by an engraving of Norham Castle in the *Liber Studiorum*, on the lower margin of which is the following inscription: "The Drawing in the possession of the late Lord Lascelles."' Lascelles is the family name of the Earls of Harewood. In 1858 the drawing (27 by 19 inches) was at Harewood House, Grosvenor Square, whence it was removed to Christie and Manson's, and there sold on May the 1st, under the name 'A Castle on a height above a river in which cows are standing,' to the late Mr. John Dillon at the price of 109*l.* 4*s.* At the sale there of that gentleman's collection in 1869, it was purchased by Agnew for 500 guineas. In 1887 it was the property of Daniel Thwaites, Esq., and

<sup>1</sup> MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Said to have been Cadell, the publisher. See Rawlinson's *Notes on Collection of Drawings by Turner* at R.A. 1887, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup> MSS.



lent by him to the Turner loan collection at the Royal Academy, where its place was duly marked in the chronological sequence of the painter's drawings. The descriptions under which Turner entered his Norham drawing and his other landscapes in 1798 afford a noteworthy contrast to those of previous years. Now and in future they are accompanied by verses of descriptive poetry, and an indication of the condition of light or weather under which the subject is intended to be represented. A visit to the northern counties appears then to have wrought in Turner an enlargement of feeling in the presence of grander and more impressive natural scenery similar to that which inspired the soul and guided the hand of Girtin.

In 1799 a sunset view of Caernarvon Castle by Turner, and a view of mountainous scenery near Beddgelert by Girtin, were two rival drawings at the Academy exhibition, which, unlike in subject and effect, are said to have attracted equal attention.<sup>1</sup> But Turner, as before said, was seeking for glory through his pictures in oil. He had become an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1800; and in 1802, the year of Girtin's death, he blossomed forth into a full Academician, and instead of remaining as before plain 'W. Turner,' he wrote his name at length, as he had been christened (at St. Paul's Church, near the site of Girtin's grave), 'Joseph Mallord William Turner, R.A.' Up to this time, though he had already launched out into poetic themes, such as the two 'Plagues of Egypt,' he had for the most part worked in the same field of nature with Tom Girtin. Both were abroad for the first time in 1802, and it is by the consideration of what they had done when painters of no experience beyond the scenery of their native land that comparative justice can best be done to their respective merits as artists.

'The impression derived,' says Mr. Jenkins, 'from a comparison of Turner and Girtin at this period, 1800-1802, is that Turner was the more careful and painstaking, Girtin the more vigorous and stronger in colour.' 'The breadth of Turner,' says Pye, 'is greater than that of Girtin. Energy of individuality in Girtin is generally greater than breadth.' William Havell said that both Turner and Girtin were 'great experimentalists in rendering paper and water-colours subservient to the expression of light, which they found to be chiefly dependent on gradation.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> William Havell to Pye.

<sup>2</sup> 'In such matters,' he said, 'there was no trick that they were not up to. Turner used

'In Turner,' adds Pye, 'gradation was the governing power. In Girtin, gradation had its influence, but the parts were the governing power. Turner's gradation commenced from the marginal line of the foreground of his work. In Girtin's works it did not begin till half-way to the horizon ; consequently it was not so complete as Turner's.' But he adds, 'The composition of forms and natural laws of light applied to the production of artificial light in a drawing, or of chiaroscuro apart from and in connection with local colours, were matters with which Turner was not more conversant than Girtin.' 'Sobered tints of exquisite truth, and broad chiaroscuro, are,' says Leslie,<sup>1</sup> 'the prevailing characteristics of Girtin.'

Pye regarded the English school of Landscape art which was founded by Girtin and Turner as one 'based upon a practical knowledge of chiaroscuro,' the study of which had been little attended to by continental artists. Havell, no mean authority, gave to Turner the credit of being 'the first of the water-colour draftsmen who aimed at making the eye of the spectator look into the subject of the drawing beyond the surface of the paper on which it was executed, and through it into immeasurable space.' The earlier drawings of Paul Sandby and the school before Cozens he called 'unmeaning muddle,' declaring that 'in them the eye always rested on objects individually.' But it was to Turner and Girtin alike that he attributed the merit of 'introducing fine art into landscape drawing, as Gainsborough had done in a less degree into painting.'

During the joint lives of Girtin and Turner these two artists may be regarded as joint representatives of the new school of water-colour painting of which they were the joint founders. But their influence upon that school in its further development was very different. Turner had few, if any, direct followers. His transcendent power was acknowledged by all artists, and the greatest deference was paid to his judgment when he chose to give it ; but the 'sincerest flattery' of imitation he never received. Girtin, on the contrary, had hosts of followers even in his lifetime, and it is he who must be looked upon as the real father of the group of painters of which the

to cut out figures in paper and paste them on his drawing. If his experiments spoiled one part of a drawing, he would paste the good part upon another piece of paper, rub down the edges of it, and work on the new surface till he brought the whole into harmony. He and Girtin would also seek to create gradation by pumping water upon their drawings.'

<sup>1</sup> *Handbook for Young Painters*, 265.

earlier and leading members of the Water-Colour Society were the foremost representatives.

From the time of Girtin's death the school may be considered as dividing itself into two branches, or more properly as two separate trees, springing indeed from the same soil, and having grown together as saplings, but with separate roots, one in the practice of Turner, the other in that of Girtin. The former developed into a single giant growth, majestic and solitary, crowning the forest ; while in the latter case a seedling group of rising painters sprang up around a stricken stump, and became the school of water-colours that flourished in Britain in the first half of the nineteenth century.

Nor was Girtin's influence quite confined to practitioners in that material. Leslie tell us in his *Memoirs of Constable*<sup>1</sup> that the whole course of that painter's practice was affected by the contemplation of about thirty works by Girtin which Sir George Beaumont recommended him to study as examples of breadth and truth.

<sup>1</sup> Chapter I., p. 6.



## BOOK III

### THE FOUNDING OF THE SOCIETY

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#### CHAPTER I

##### EXHIBITORS' GRIEVANCES—WELLS AND SHELLEY

*Résumé* of development—Water-colour art little known to general public—Exhibitions since 1760—Absorbed in Royal Academy—Water-colours ill seen there—Their painters excluded from academic honours—An independent exhibition proposed—*W. F. Wells*—Birth and education—Works at the Royal Academy—Published works—Connection with Turner—Circular to draftsmen—*Samuel Shelley*—Birth—Miniatures at the Royal Academy—Copies from Reynolds—Changes of address—Paints portraits and ‘history in small.’

‘WHETHER Turner or Girtin, if either, is entitled to be called the originator of the natural method of water-colour painting, which gives their due value to the local hues of objects under various influences of light, is an inquiry which has but slight bearing on their relative positions as artists. Its interest in the history of this art is of the same kind as that prolific, but not very profitable, subject of discussion, the claims of the Van Eycks to the invention of oil-painting.’<sup>1</sup> But, to whomsoever due, it was a change of process which led to an assimilation of effect and finally to a rivalry in force between water-colour and oil. A full competition between the two branches of art had not yet been rendered possible; but the former had now assumed a new rank and position. It was no longer ‘drawing’ but ‘painting’ in water-colours.

The old method still continued to be practised by some artists, particularly as the commencement of a picture. And it has its undoubted advantages. Pyne<sup>2</sup> admits that those who work by this process ‘can execute their tinted designs with ten times the despatch of those who paint their compositions.’ Still he holds that ‘however bright the effects which they may bring out by washing their colours

<sup>1</sup> *The Spectator*, 14 August, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 193.

over a general and unvaried preparation of black and grey,' they are properly denominated draftsmen or tinters; 'not by way of reproach, but from the mechanical ease of their practice.' For the purposes to which it was applied by the old topographers, the tinted manner was still, and for such purposes it in many respects remains to this day, the best that could be employed. Except in providing the sensuous delight of rich and varied colouring, and in effecting a close imitation of details not essential to the story, there is ample scope in this manner of drawing for an artistic portrayal of such subjects as have usually to be dealt with by the topographic draftsman. In architectural drawing, the union of line and wash is almost indispensable, and there is no method which enables the sketcher to carry away more quickly so complete a memorandum of so many material facts. In the hands of some of the artists who followed Sandby, it was moreover shown to be capable of being made the vehicle of great beauty of sentiment and delicacy of expression.

But the purposes to which water-colours had now to be applied belong to a different category from their old uses. Water-colour artists had hitherto, as we have seen, looked to several special kinds of employment as their means of subsistence. Landscape draftsmen had begun by supplying drawings to the publishers of prints to illustrate British topography. This practice led in time to their engagement by travellers abroad, first to record the scenes in strange lands laid open to view in voyages of discovery; and then, as artist companions to persons of wealth and position. Relations sprang up between artists and amateurs which conferred mutual benefits upon both. The art of the former gained in refinement through the appreciation of its higher qualities by a more cultured taste, and the latter acquired practical knowledge enabling them the better to record, and at the same time the more accurately to observe, the beauties of nature. Thus arose a further important source of emolument to this class of artists as professional teachers of drawing.

Besides these occupations, which in general constituted the permanent and more regular means of living, water-colour drawings, or 'paintings' as they were now entitled to be called, had come to be regarded as *desiderata* by collectors to stock their portfolios with, if not as yet to hang in heavy frames upon their drawing-room walls. The prices of these works, valued for their own sakes as objects of beauty and interest, not, as in earlier times, for the sake of their

subjects only, or for their capacity to secure a profit by reproduction as engravings, were rising year by year.

Hitherto the sale of such drawings had been chiefly promoted by this private form of patronage. They were either executed on commission, or mainly sought for by connoisseurs and a special class of collectors. Among the general public, the excellence of the new branch of art was little known, and the demand was proportionately small for paintings in water-colour. The reason was that they had not as yet been duly seen. There was in their case no adequate provision for public display, no sufficient market for open sale. Dealers no doubt existed who knew the wants, perhaps the weaknesses, of their customers. But their fraternity had not yet risen to be arbiters of taste to *millionnaires* who lacked it, or to hold in their hands the power of making a struggling artist rich or poor.

No doubt also there were the exhibitions. Since the opening of the first, in the rooms of the Society of Arts in 1760, until near the end of the century, there had been, annually, either one or two or three exhibitions of the latest works of living artists in England. Till the year 1768, when the Royal Academy was founded, there were the two rival bodies, the *Society of Artists* (incorporated by royal charter in 1765), and the *Free Society* (enrolled in the Court of King's Bench in 1763), each of which had its annual show, the former at Spring Gardens, the latter at several different places in succession, first at the Society of Arts, then in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, and afterwards at the bottom of the Haymarket. In both of these, 'water-colours' (i.e. distemper drawings) and stained or tinted drawings had been exhibited. The Incorporated Society had comprised the artists of greater distinction, but these were drawn off into the ranks of the new Academy, which from the time of its first exhibition, in 1769, had provided the principal, and whose galleries at Somerset House were, at the time now under consideration, the only regular public show-rooms of 'the year's art.' Its attractions had at the outset distanced those of the rival exhibitions.

The Incorporated Society, shorn of its leading members, continued its annual shows at Spring Gardens till 1773, when it appeared in new quarters, which it had built for itself in the Strand; that is to say, in a great room afterwards called the Lyceum, at Exeter Change,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Exeter Change, between Wellington Street and Burleigh Street, on the site of the Lyceum Theatre, was taken down in 1829. (Hutton's *Literary Landmarks in London*.)



where the Lyceum Theatre now stands. But this speculation was fatal to the society. It had to sell the building in order to pay for its erection, and afterwards maintained no more than a spasmodic existence ; which in 1791 came to an end, where it began, at Spring Gardens, after longer and longer intervals of suspended animation.

The Free Society, though always a much smaller concern, lingered to a later date, holding annual exhibitions, which latterly attracted no notice, till 1799. 'After the establishment of the Royal Academy, not a single artist joined the society.' But it also had a great room built for it, by Mr. Christie, next to Cumberland House, Pall Mall ; and here it is presumed its exhibitions were held from 1769, or earlier, until 1775, when it moved to St. Alban's Street, Pall Mall, and was lost in obscurity.<sup>1</sup>

What had virtually been the case for many years past, was the actual state of things now ; that is to say, at the time of Girtin's death, and Turner's reception into the higher rank of the Academy, in 1802. It was only to Somerset House, 'The Exhibition'<sup>2</sup> as it was called, *par excellence*, that the water-colour artist who was not content to depend on private patronage only, or on the favour of dealers, could go to exhibit his wares. Here, however, partly from their own nature, partly from the arrangements of the galleries, they were exposed to an unequal competition, which they were ill able to bear. To some extent, indeed, the water-colour drawings were separated from the oil-pictures. But the distinction made between them was one which placed the former not only in a different, but in a lower, category.

The rooms at Somerset House, occupied since 1780 by the Royal Academy for their exhibition galleries, consisted of the following, situated in the right wing, in the Strand. On the ground floor was the Sculpture Room. On the first floor were the Library (a small room), and the Antique Academy, leading to the Lecture Room, described as 'spacious, elegant, and well-proportioned.' On the second floor were the '*Anti-Room*' (so always spelt), a small apartment receiving its light from an arched window above the entrance ; and the

<sup>1</sup> See Pye's *Patronage of British Art*, 286.

<sup>2</sup> As one speaks of 'The Bible' in contradistinction to all other *βιβλία*, the Royal Academy exhibition was long known in London society as 'The Exhibition.' In 1851 the title got transferred to the 'World's Show,' which took place in that year in Hyde Park. The name was afterwards reserved for its international successors at South Kensington, but has now lost its special meaning.

Grand Exhibition Room, which, measuring about 60 by 50 feet, was described as 'noble and spacious' and 'judiciously lighted by four arched windows' distributing 'an equal light over the whole.'<sup>1</sup> One of the rooms used for the exhibition is called the 'Council Room' in some of the catalogues. It is believed to have been appropriated to that use at a later period.

With the exception of miniatures during the first few years, water-colour pictures were never placed in the great room.<sup>2</sup> That this exclusion was not made in order to give their merits a better chance of recognition, is suggested by the fact that in the rooms to which they were admitted they were 'not only hung,' says Pyne, 'amidst pictures in oil, but were generally surrounded by such inferior performances as were not deemed worthy of a place in the principal apartment. These were usually subjects ill conceived, badly drawn, and worse coloured—garish and staring in effect, and commonly so entirely at variance with harmony, as not only to excite disgust in the spectator, but by the violence of their opposition, to do manifest injury to the chaste and unobtrusive works in water-colours. These disadvantages were not all; the light in the apartments appropriated to the water-colour department was ill calculated to display the merits of such delicate and high-finished works; being admitted through common sashes, and frequently glaring on the subjects on one side of the room, whilst those on the other side were exhibited on the piers and spaces between the windows, with the light from behind. Hence, many works of great merit appeared not as pictures, but merely as so many pier-glasses. Moreover, the crowded state of these apartments frequently interrupted the light from falling on the pictures that happened to be hung within five or six feet of the floor. Had the same works been exhibited in the upper story, where the light was admitted from above, this latter inconvenience would have been obviated, as the angle of light would have fallen [*sic*] uninterruptedly upon all sides of the apartment alike.'<sup>3</sup> Even had the separation been fairly complete, the merits of the water-colours would still have been 'eclipsed to the public eye' by the contrast afforded on passing from 'large and splendid performances executed in oil, under the influence of that imposing transparency and splendour

<sup>1</sup> *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1780, p. 220.

<sup>2</sup> Leslie, in a letter to Pye (22 December, 1857) respecting Turner's paintings

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 130.

which varnish superadds to pictures so painted,' to the adjacent apartments appointed for the exhibition of 'works of their chaste and unassuming character.'<sup>1</sup> But 'the limited space then at the disposal of the Royal Academy could not be enlarged, and the water-colour painters consequently saw no prospect of exhibiting their works in a way to do them justice.'

They had another and serious ground of complaint in the existence of 'a law of the Royal Academy which excluded from Academic honours those artists who wrought in water-colours only. The painters in water-colours urged with reason that professional rank ought not to depend upon the vehicle used, but upon the merits of the works in whatever materials executed—that if the use of oil-colours had its special advantage, so had water-colours, the practice of which had become greatly developed; and that it behoved those who followed exclusively this branch of painting to endeavour to show that the slight which the rule of the Royal Academy appeared to cast upon it was unmerited; and they pointed to the genius of Turner and of Girtin and other artists of eminence, whose practice had superseded the early stained and tinted manner of their predecessors' of the time when the Academy had been founded 'and had contributed to raise water-colour art to the dignity of painting.'<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, those Academicians who painted in water-colour as well as in oil acquired privileges when once elected (on the strength of their oil-pictures) which enabled them to place their compeers in the lower branch of art at a further disadvantage. 'Though the splendid works of Turner, of Westall, &c.,' says Robert Hills, 'were conspicuously placed, the greater part of the water-colour paintings were hung,' as above stated, amidst oil-paintings, between windows and under windows, sometimes in the darkened room with the sculpture, where if they had merit it could not have been seen.' It has even been said that 'the exhibitions of the Royal Academy were so crowded with the products of amateurs, that the pictures of professional painters could not obtain that prominence they deserved.'<sup>3</sup>

Under these circumstances,<sup>4</sup> it occurred to certain of the painters in water-colours, that it would be desirable to establish an indepen-

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 130.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>3</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 July, 1850, p. 216.

<sup>4</sup> 'It is not true' (as had been alleged), says Hills in some manuscript notes in the Society's possession, 'that the thought of establishing the Water-Colour Society originated in the fascination of the water-colour drawings of Turner in the Council Room at Somerset House;



dent exhibition, wherein their works could be displayed to more advantage. The idea is said to have first suggested itself to a landscape painter of recognized ability, if of no great distinction, named *Wells*, who in his time enjoyed extensive practice as a teacher of drawing.

WILLIAM FREDERICK WELLS was born in 1762 in London, where as a boy of twelve he is said to have learnt from Barralet<sup>1</sup> to draw in pencil and crayon. As a practitioner in art, his name first occurs in the catalogue of the Royal Academy for 1795 with two views in Scotland, after which date he had sent there from four to eight drawings annually, mostly subjects from Wales. Possibly he was the author of a '*Treatise on Anatomy, and Proportions of the Human Figure, adapted to the arts of Designing, Painting, and Sculpture, illustrated with copper-plates, designed principally for the information of such Ladies as practise the above arts, &c.,*' published in 1796. Certainly he had a share in the production of a set of seventy-two soft-ground etchings, in imitation of chalk drawings, which, gathered into a folio volume in 1819, bear the title, '*A Collection of Prints, illustrative of English Scenery, from the Drawings and Sketches of Thos. Gainsborough, R.A., in the various collections of the R<sup>t</sup> Hon. Baroness Lucas ; Viscount Palmerston ; George Hibbert, Esq. ; Dr. Monro ; and several other Gentlemen.*'<sup>2</sup> Engraved and Published by W. F. Wells and J. Laporte. J. Smeeton, Printer, 148 St. Martin's

but from drawings' of others being 'badly placed, and mixed with oil ; from the Law casting a stigma on water-colour painters ; and from the desire to establish a mart for sale of the labour of years, and, of a surplus after expenses to the successful, by a dividend.' The allegation thus traversed by Hills is contained in the following passage in a short biography of Robson the water-colour painter, written in 1833, by Thomas Uwins, afterwards R.A. 'The writer is old enough,' he says, 'to recollect the time when the council-room of the Royal Academy was devoted to the exhibition of paintings in water-colours. Here were to be seen the rich and masterly sketches of Hamilton, the fascinating compositions of Westall, the beautiful landscapes of Girtin, Callcott, and Reinagle, and the splendid creations of Turner—the mightiest enchanter who has ever wielded the magic power of art in any age or country. At this time the council-room, instead of being what the present arrangement makes it, a place of retirement from the bustle of the other departments, was itself the great point of attraction. Here crowds first collected, and here they lingered longest, because it was here the imagination was addressed through the means of an art which added the charm of novelty to excellence. It was the fascination of this room that first led to the idea of forming an exhibition entirely of pictures in water-colours.' (See *Memoirs of Thomas Uwins, R.A.*, by Mrs. Uwins, i. 30, 31.)

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*. Probably J. Melchior Barralet, who taught both figure and landscape.

<sup>2</sup> Other owners are 'Mr. Alexander' and 'J. Laporte.'

Lane.' Some of the plates are tinted in colours, and in some there are monochrome shadows, put in by hand with a brush. The dates upon them are from 1 January, 1802, to 1 January, 1805. Each artist did half the number. Laporte's are drawn with greater freedom of hand than Wells's.

Wells, as we see, was about thirteen years older than Turner and Girtin. Of the former painter he was a lifelong friend, and is said to have shown a fatherly kindness towards him. Turner was about seventeen years of age (that is to say, it was about the year 1792) when he was introduced to Wells by Robert Ker Porter. The intimacy so commenced will be ever memorable from the circumstance of Wells's having happily suggested to the great painter the first idea of his *Liber Studiorum*, and induced him to commence that work, the four earliest drawings for which (executed in sepia) were made at Wells's house at Knockholt in Kent. There is an earlier, and also interesting, association between his and Turner's careers. He went to school in the very house in Queen Anne Street which, afterwards added to by Turner, was occupied by that artist for so many years as a studio and gallery, and where the great painter's hoard of pictures and piles of prints were found stored up and rotting after his death in 1851. The schoolmaster was a Mr. Harper; but the fact that Turner had an aunt of the name of Harpur (his mother's elder sister, wife of the curate of Islington, who was grandfather of Mr. Henry Harpur, one of the painter's executors) may be no more than a coincidence. Turner, on his side, is known to have exhibited marked emotion on hearing of Wells's death in 1836.<sup>1</sup>

It was in the first or second year of the present century that Wells 'endeavoured to stimulate some of his friends, practitioners' of water-colour art, to form a society for the purpose of establishing an independent exhibition of their paintings. 'He wrote,' says his daughter,<sup>2</sup> 'a very excellent letter, which was printed and sent to

<sup>1</sup> He told Wells's daughter, Mrs. Wheeler, that he thought he should have died if he had not been relieved by a violent hemorrhage at the nose. Turner, by his will, left a legacy of 100*l.* to each of Wells's three daughters. A story related by Mr. Ruskin, in his *Lectures on Architecture and Painting*, that Turner lent large sums to Wells's widow, and refused repayment, saying, 'Keep it and send your children to school and to church,' is contradicted by a correspondent in the *Athenæum*, 10 June, 1854, as quite inconsistent with Wells's known condition and circumstances of life.

<sup>2</sup> *A Sketch of the original Foundation of the old Water-Colour Society*, privately printed, by Clara Wheeler, 7 pages, 8vo, 1871.

all the principal draftsmen in the profession, to urge the necessity of a movement in that direction.' No copy of this letter is known to exist, but its motto—

Our doubts are traitors,  
And make us lose the good we oft might win  
By fearing to attempt—<sup>1</sup>

seems to have referred to a timid apprehension, which existed in the outer ranks of the profession, of offending the members of the Royal Academy. It was Wells's endeavour to overcome this feeling, by contending that the desire for a separate exhibition was not prompted by a spirit of antagonism or rivalry. He also sent many anonymous letters, written by the same daughter (Clara, afterwards Mrs. Wheeler), who acted as his private secretary.

A fair share, however, of the merit of conceiving, as well as calling into existence, the first society for the exclusive exhibition of water-colour art, should be apportioned to an older painter, *Samuel Shelley*, who was Wells's first coadjutor in the scheme. Each had urged its practicability in separate conversations with a common friend, who thereupon introduced them to one another, and they then proceeded to discuss the matter together.

SAMUEL SHELLEY, a quarter of a century older than Turner and Girtin, and twelve years senior to Wells (for he was born in 1750), could not be considered as one of the rising school that had effected such changes in water-colour art. He was in age one of the earlier generation, but he represented a class of painting in that medium which, in its way, suffered nearly as much by the Academy arrangements as did the water-colour landscapes. He was a figure-painter, chiefly celebrated for his miniatures. But his practice was not confined to the making of likenesses in little. In truth, he had not much cause to complain of his treatment as a portrait-painter. The painting of miniatures, being an old-established branch of British art, of well-recognized importance long before the Academy came into existence, had not been unfavourably dealt with in the arrangements at Somerset House. These charming little effigies, grouped together, set in a better light, rendered attractive by their own delicate brilliancy, as well as by their subjects, and having, as everyone knew, to be judged on close inspection, could not have suffered as much

<sup>1</sup> *Measure for Measure*, act i., sc. 5.



as the water-colour landscapes by proximity to large and showy pictures in oil.

From a small beginning and an obscure origin, Samuel Shelley had risen to a place in the front rank of the miniature-painters of his day, at a period of great excellence in that branch of art, having for some ten or twelve years past shared the leading practice therein with the gay and eccentric favourite of society, Richard Cosway, R.A., and the King's limner in small, Richard Collins.

Dayes tells us that Shelley was born in Whitechapel, and was in some measure self-educated, but that he founded his style on the works of Reynolds, which he copied early in life to his great advantage. In 1773 we find him living 'at Mr. Shelley's,' probably his father's, in 'High Street, Whitechapel,' and beginning to exhibit at the Incorporated Society's with some fancy heads in miniature. By the next year he seems to have already made a good professional connection, for he appears at the Royal Academy with portraits of 'a clergyman' and 'a nobleman's three sons'—whose, we know not, for it was not then the custom to insert the names of sitters in the general catalogue,<sup>1</sup> though a key containing them was published and sold separately. In 1775 he had a few portraits at the Exeter Change gallery, but after this he confined himself to the Somerset House exhibitions. In 1778 he makes a first move westward. Leaving Whitechapel, where he had still hailed from 'Mr. Shelley's' (or 'Shelly's,' for the name is spelt both ways in the catalogues) at Nos. 92, 24, and 62 successively, he sets up for himself<sup>2</sup> 'at Mr. Fentum's, No. 78 Salisbury Street, Strand.' Creeping on year by year through Litchfield Street, Soho, King Street, Covent Garden, No. 16, and Henrietta Street, ditto, Nos. 20, 29, and 7, at which last address he remains from 1784 to 1794, he finally settles in the aristocratic quarter in which we now find him, at No. 6 George<sup>3</sup> Street, Hanover Square, where stands the church at which Mr. and Mrs. Tom Girtin were married, as many a prouder couple have been before and since.

<sup>1</sup> It was not until 1798 that names were given, and a charge (sixpence) was then first made for the catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> Possibly these are only business addresses, and do not indicate his actual places of residence.

<sup>3</sup> In this Georgian era it was sometimes called 'Great George Street.' It is not clear to which noun the adjective was meant to apply.

During this time he had been painting and exhibiting, not portraits only, but what Dayes describes as 'history in small,' which kind of practice that writer, who is naught if not censorious, regards as raising Shelley 'above the character of a mere miniature painter,' and placing him 'among the few who do not consider the profession in a mercenary point of view.' We have seen that his first venture in public was an ideal head. It is not, however, till 1780 that we find him again so exercising his fancy in a drawing of 'Maria, from Sterne.'<sup>1</sup> Two years after, he becomes more ambitious, and paints the 'Witches saluting Macbeth.'<sup>2</sup> This seems to have had an encouraging success, for in 1783 he has as many fancy pieces as portraits; and then he goes on yearly intermingling illustrations from poetic fiction with likenesses of living persons more or less distinguished. Mr. Graves counts up 140 works in all exhibited by Shelley at the Royal Academy.

It was chiefly in these subject pieces that Shelley encountered the damaging competition with oil-pictures of which Wells had complained; and subjects painted by him on ivory of a large size had been accumulating in his studio.<sup>3</sup> Thus, in the agitation for a separate gallery, he could, as representing the figure element in water-colour painting, make common cause with that artist, who spoke for the landscape draftsmen.

<sup>1</sup> Another *Sterne's Maria* by a different hand hung near it in the exhibition. A *Sterne's Maria*, by Shelley, was sold at Christie's in February 1885 for 6*l.* 15*s.*

<sup>2</sup> Of this subject, there is a miniature on ivory by him at the South Kensington Museum.

<sup>3</sup> R. Hills—J. J. J. MSS.

## CHAPTER II

## HILLS, PYNE, AND POCOCK

*Robert Hills*—Birth and education—Works at Royal Academy—Ardour in sketching—Etchings begun—Takes pupils—Drawings—*W. H. Pyne*—Birth and education—Pars's school—Works at Royal Academy—Etchings and illustrations—Social qualities—Historian and narrator—Instability of purpose—Plan of proposed society—Survey of profession—*Nicholas Pocock*—Birth and parentage—Commands Champion's vessels—Sketches at sea—Settles in London—Early works—Paints sea-fights—Portrait by son.

SHELLEY had two sympathetic friends in the profession, nearly twenty years younger than himself, who lived close by, and were probably greater sufferers than he. One was *Robert Hills*, painter, in water-colours, of animals and rustic scenes ; who lived but two doors off, at No. 8. The other was *William Henry Pyne*, already mentioned, and often quoted in these pages, a writer indeed to whom all historians of English water-colour art must be indebted for much of their information. He lived two doors further on, at No. 10.<sup>1</sup> In converse with these near neighbours, Shelley aired his grievances, and the three had many a chat together on the matter at their respective firesides.

ROBERT HILLS was born in Islington on the 26th of June, 1769. Although thirty-four at the time now under consideration, he does not seem to have come much before the public yet as a water-colour painter of animals. He had exhibited at the Royal Academy a 'Wood Scene with Gipsy Fortune-tellers,' in 1791, and a 'Landscape' in 1792, giving as his address, first 'Keppel Row,' then Alsop's Buildings, New Road. His name then disappears from the catalogues for seven years, turning up again in 1800, in 'Upper Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square,' as exhibitor of a first 'Cottage Scene, with Cattle.' In 1801, he has a view of the gate of St. Augustine's, Canterbury (a favourite subject that season), and he puts in the animals to two drawings by Pyne, namely a view in Greenwich Park, and a Wilt-

<sup>1</sup> R.A. Catalogue, 1801. Autograph letter, 1 November, 1802. By 1805 he had moved to 38 Argyll Street, not far off.



shire farmhouse with cattle. With these exceptions, we do not find his name as an exhibitor before the foundation of the Water-Colour Society.

Some early instruction in drawing had been given him by the old teacher, John Gresse, before mentioned, who for many years gave lessons at Mrs. Broadbelt's school in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, where young Hills was probably a scholar. 'But it is certain that he soon found a wiser master in the force of his own inclination, which led him to the study of animal life in the forest, the farmyard, and the pasture, sketching with untiring zeal, deer, oxen, sheep and cattle, singly and in groups, in great variety, or in observing their habits under the varied influences of the seasons. His careful studies of the heads, horns and bones of the different species testify to the pains he took to master the distinctive features and exact structure of animal form.'<sup>1</sup>

He was in his way a keen deerstalker, but his sport consisted in recording, not in destroying, animal life. When out on such expeditions, and absorbed in an object of such keen interest to him, he would show the determination of his character. It is related that on one of these occasions 'he suddenly came upon a magnificent stag, of which he resolved, if possible, to secure a sketch. Like a sportsman sighting his game, he stealthily followed the track of the retreating animal deeper and deeper into the recesses of the forest, and only gave up the pursuit when evening was closing in, to realize the fact that he had not tasted food the whole day, and had many weary miles to retrace before he could procure any refreshment.'<sup>1</sup>

Although so little of Hills's work had appeared on the exhibition walls, he had already justified his later reputation by giving to the world, as the result of his out-of-door studies of animal life, the first instalments of a remarkably fine series of etchings, which, issued in parts, had commenced in 1798, and were now in course of publication. It is probable also that he had become engaged in tuition, which was afterwards to him, as to so many of our best water-colour painters, a regular source of emolument.

Hills's pencil studies and sketches of animals and rustic scenes are of extreme beauty. There can be no better models of practice in the handling of his material as a means of expression. The late Mr. George Smith, of Hamilton Terrace, had a large collection of them.

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MS.

There are a few at the British Museum, some dated 1801 and 1802.

WILLIAM HENRY PYNE was born in the same year (1769) as Robert Hills. According to Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> he was the son of a leather-seller in Holborn; and the same biographer states that his father placed him, when a boy, under a clever drawing-master, whom he disliked, and would not serve as an apprentice. From Pyne's own account, as editor of the *Somerset House Gazette*, this would seem to have been one Henry Pars (he calls him 'William'), elder brother of William Pars, A.R.A. From about 1763 to the time of his death in 1806 at the age of seventy-two,<sup>2</sup> this teacher kept a drawing academy well known in its day, which had been founded by a painter called William Shipley (also the main originator of the Society of Arts), to whom Pars succeeded at the date first mentioned. It was carried on in a house in the Strand, which afterwards became a portion of Ackermann's Repository of Arts. Here, says the writer, 'for one short season we attempted the use of black and white chalks.'<sup>3</sup> For copying plaster casts from the antique seems to have been the limit of the practice at Pars's school, whither at that time students went to be prepared for 'St. Martin's Lane.'<sup>4</sup>

Leaving this scrap of autobiography to be further elucidated as it may, we tread on surer ground when searching the Royal Academy catalogues for Pyne's exhibited works. From 1790 to 1801 he had at intervals been exhibiting drawings, twenty in all, coming for the most part under the category of Landscape. But 'he possessed one great advantage over most of his contemporaries who treated similar subjects, in the ability with which he introduced figures and animals into his landscapes, so as to render them, not mere accessories, but of positive interest.'<sup>5</sup> In the titles of his first year's drawings, indeed, figures are set forth by the titles as the acknowledged principals. 'Travelling Comedians,' 'Bartholomew-fair,' 'A Puppet-show,' and 'A Village with figures merry-making,' are the congenial subjects with which he breaks ground in 1790 and 1791. After this they are chiefly rural views, in various English counties; with a few, such as

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 221.

<sup>4</sup> Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, i. 8, 9. Redgrave, in his *Dictionary* ('Henry Pars,' 'William Shipley') seems to confound the Strand school with the senior Academy.

<sup>5</sup> *Art Union*, October 1843.

'Corn Harvest,' 'Gipsies in a Wood,' 'Anglers,' and 'A Conversation,' which give a hint that the figures constitute the main source of interest. In 1801, he and neighbour Hills join brushes to produce two works in combination, and then both abstain, while they and their fellow-conspirators are hatching their plot.

But Pyne, like Hills, had also given evidence of his talent by a use of the etching point. There are said to exist three large plates by him of figure-groups for decorating landscapes, published by Ackermann, in a wrapper, with the date 1791.<sup>1</sup> And there may be more of that early time. There is also a book called '*Nattes's Practical Geometry*, or an introduction to Perspective, translated from the French of Le Clere, with additions and alterations,' which has a vignette title-page engraved by W. H. Pyne after a design by C. Nattes, with the imprint 'Pub<sup>d</sup> &c. for J. C. Nattes by W. Miller, Albemarle Street, 1805.' A second edition, in 8vo, is dated 1819. It is curiously illustrated with forty-four other plates containing geometrical diagrams, under each of which is a vignette etched by Pyne 'from designs analogous to the different geometrical figures,' the subjects being such as the following: a horse-mill, windmill, water conduit and carts, kilns, pumps, cranes and other machines, with figures about them appropriately employed as wheelwrights, printers, woodmen, sawyers, brickmakers and other artisans at work; and picturesque objects and groups of various kinds. Many of these are signed 'W. H. Pyne. 1803.'

At this time he must also have been actively engaged in putting together the varied contents of a work which when complete was published in two volumes oblong folio, with the title, '*Microcosm*, or a Picturesque Delineation of the Arts, Agriculture, Manufactures &c. of Great Britain, in a series of above a thousand groups of small figures for the embellishment of landscape, comprising the most interesting subjects in rural and domestic scenery, in external and internal navigation, in country sports and employments, in the arts of war and peace; the whole accurately drawn from nature, and etched by W. H. Pyne, and aquatinted by J. Hill—to which are now added explanations of the plates, and essays relating to their various subjects by C. Gray. . . . Pub<sup>d</sup> by W. H. Pyne, No. 38 Argyle Street, and J. C. Nattes, No. 5 Woodstock Street, &c.' Vol. i. (2nd edit. dated 1806) contains 61 plates, and vol. ii. 71. The imprints on the plates

<sup>1</sup> *Bookseller's Catalogue.*



have dates from March 1802 to 1807. Other series of plates of the same class by him belong to a later date.

A few groups like those of the Microcosm are at the British Museum. In them the pen is used neatly (without the freedom and dash of a dexterous sketcher such, for example, as Rowlandson), and some are composed with much taste. There is a drawing by him at South Kensington of 'Rustic Cottages' with the date 1806; 'painted in transparent colour, lights taken out, and some opaque colour used.'<sup>1</sup>

The writer of an obituary notice of Pyne in the *Art Union* of October 1843, who seems to have known him well, considers him to have been 'in many respects the *beau idéal* of the artistic character—disinterestedly devoted to art for its own sake, even to enthusiasm, yet unfortunately for himself not gifted with the enthusiasm of application. A sort of constitutional easiness and happy temperament of mind rendered him more indifferent to worldly success, even in his profession, than was consistent with prudence. Otherwise he might no doubt have distinguished himself as one of the first water-colour painters of the day, especially in familiar rural landscape scenery and topographical views with old buildings, which he either sketched or composed with great facility, and with admirable feeling.' The same writer gives him the credit of having 'in some instances invented, in others improved upon' the processes which transformed the tinter's art into water-colour painting. But we do not find him making any such claim on his own behalf. He had begun in the old manner. 'In his early works,' says Redgrave, 'his foregrounds are carefully drawn with the pen and tinted with warm colour, his middle distances put in with grey.' But he was now one of those who most clearly appreciated the importance of the change which had taken place in the *technique* of water-colour art.<sup>2</sup>

Pyne himself, however, has been more widely recognized as the historian of that art, than as one of its leading practitioners. Of his

<sup>1</sup> *Descriptive Catalogue*, 175.

<sup>2</sup> Graves, in his Index, describes the twenty-two works which Pyne exhibited at Somerset House between 1790 and 1811 as being chiefly 'portraits;' a description which in fact applies to no more than two, which he exhibited in the last of those years, he then having had nothing at the Academy since 1801. Pyne no doubt was a versatile artist, and could turn his hand to portraiture when he chose. John Britton the antiquary had two drawings of his, one representing 'The Beefsteak Club,' the other 'The Sale of Dr. Mead's Pictures and Antiques,' both with portraits, and said to be capital illustrations of the time. See also Britton's *Autobiography*, Part II. p. 183.

literary works there will be occasion to speak more fully by-and-by. Suffice it at present to say that in their lively, unclassic style, and the fund of anecdote they contain, they bespeak the writer's turn for gossip, as well as a certain instability in his character. 'Gossip,' says his biographer above quoted, 'was at once his forte and his foible. He was not so remarkable for conversational as for narrative power. No one could tell a story better or more graphically. Anecdote would beget anecdote and story story from him, during an entire evening, to the immense gratification of his auditors, but to the suspension of other conversation. He has been known to go out to a breakfast party, and by entertaining to detain all the company till one o'clock the following morning. But this talent was dearly paid for, by his indulging it too far, to the sacrifice of time, and the interruption of study that might have been more profitable. Another foible in him was want of steadiness in his pursuits. He was always projecting some scheme or other, some of them very chimerical ones, as to whose success he was for the time most sanguine until a fresher one started up out of his prolific imagination.'<sup>1</sup> This was the kind of man to espouse with warmth the cause of the slighted draftsmen; and he now bent his energies to the task in hand of securing fair play to their profession. If the above account of him is to be relied on, he must have ruled the discussions in George Street, Hanover Square.

The nature of those discussions may be in a measure inferred from the protocol of regulations for the Society, which was their eventual outcome. The reformers were soon agreed as to the evils that existed, and as to the proper remedy to be applied. It was conceived that, given the materials of an attractive exhibition, a mode might be devised for an equitable distribution among the members of any surplus which should arise from the excess of the receipts at the doors over the annual expenses of rent, advertisements, money and check takers, upholsterers &c. The members' shares in such distribution were to be proportioned to 'the capital they had thrown in of labour and also frames and glasses. Another prominent feature in the first sketch for a plan and constitution was suggested by the reflection that when a work at the Royal Academy, through its own merits and the advantage of a good place, had attracted the notice of a lover and patron of art, there had still been an impediment to its

<sup>1</sup> *Art Union*, October 1843.

sale in the awkwardness of backing out of the artist's house when the price asked was deemed too much, or perhaps finding that it was already sold. A clerk in the exhibition room with a book containing the prices of all those paintings sent for sale, ready to answer inquiries and to take deposits, would give the artist a much better chance for customers than he would have at the Royal Academy; as, on the other hand, if a would-be purchaser asked the prices of twenty works by the same hand or by as many different artists, and found that every one according to his opinion had been overrated, he would have paid his shilling for looking at them, and owed not even a hint of apology for having purchased nothing.<sup>1</sup>

But the preliminary difficulty had first to be encountered by the projectors of obtaining a sufficient number of adherents to the good cause. Of the old leaders of the school most had passed away or were *hors de combat*. The elder *Cozens*, *Barret*, *Gainsborough*, were long since dead. They had been followed in the last decade of the old year by *Webber*, *Grimm*, *Tom Sandby*, *William Marlow*, and *John Cozens*. *Thomas Malton* (the elder), *Michael Rooker*, and *Wheatley*, all died in 1801, and *James Malton* in 1803. Before the scheme was to be accomplished, *Thomas Malton* (the younger), and poor *Dayes* were to go too, both in 1804. In their midst, the bright flame of young *Girtin's* genius had burst forth, and in 1802 expired. Hale old *Paul Sandby* was living yet, in sunny St. George's Row. But his sum of winters approached fourscore; and he and *Hearne*, now in his sixtieth year,<sup>2</sup> were to be reckoned as veterans of the old generation, not as reformers of the new. There were *Loutherbourg*, aged sixty-three, *Farington*, fifty-six, and *Thomas Daniell*, fifty-four, all of whom had practised more or less in water-colour. But they were in the Academy. The splendid talent of *Turner* was inaccessible for the same reason. But there were a number of rising men, and others that had attained eminence, who favoured the project. It was believed that their works, brought together, would form an exhibition not only attractive to the public, but remunerative to the artists. 'Shelley, besides his popularity from miniature portraits,' had, as before mentioned, 'a collection of subjects on ivory of a large size. *Glover* of Lichfield had started and was in vogue. *J. Varley* was a man of

<sup>1</sup> R. Hills. MS.

<sup>2</sup> Hearne died on 'April 13, 1817, and was buried by his friend Dr. Monro in Bushey churchyard.' (Redgrave's *Dictionary*.) The publication of the 'Antiquities' plates continued till 1806.



acknowledged talent. There were still *Nicholson, Cristall*, and others.<sup>1</sup>

And among the older painters of acknowledged repute there was at least 'Warwick' *Smith* who had declared himself favourable to the scheme. With his name it seemed to be feasible. But, friend though he was, he was also cautious not to commit himself to a share of certain expenses and uncertain advantages. He promised repeatedly to attend, but as often failed to do so—'playing,' as Hills describes his conduct, 'She would and she would not.' Others were shy of the undertaking for the same reason, others again from a dread of hopeless exclusion from the Royal Academy in case of failure. The utmost hope of the projectors had been that they might muster twenty names to start with; but from the above causes the accomplishment of their plans was delayed (reckoning from the time of Wells and Shelley's first conception) for nearly three years. It was not until the autumn of 1804 that ten artists could be got together to mould the concern into a definite shape.

Some of the six recruits were men of weight and distinction. The oldest in years was *Nicholas Pocock*. He was chiefly a marine painter. It was very desirable to have a branch of art of such living interest in that age of naval warfare adequately represented in the exhibition, apart from the valuable element of variety which it would impart. Pocock was an artist of position, deservedly in high esteem. Though one of the now antiquated school of stainers and tinters, he has been reckoned 'among the first to rescue his art from the dominion of outline by blending softness and aerial perspective with force of effect.'<sup>2</sup>

NICHOLAS POCOCK was born about 1741, and consequently sixty-three or so when our Society was formed. His knowledge of marine matters was derived from actual experience as a sailor, he having when a young man had the command of vessels owned by Mr. Richard Champion, a Bristol merchant. It was the same Richard Champion who afterwards took to making china, and became celebrated as the producer of the fine porcelain known as Bristol ware. Redgrave<sup>3</sup> tells us that Pocock's father was himself a merchant of that city and a man of good descent. But he seems to have left his family somewhat ill provided for. Champion's sister writes of 'Captain Nicholas Pocock, who commanded the *Lloyd*' (in April

<sup>1</sup> R. Hills. MS.

<sup>2</sup> J. W. Papworth. MS.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*,

1767), as a 'young man who had been some time in' that ship-owner's 'employ, one of three brothers, whose mother was a widow supported by this son. He was,' she adds, 'much caressed by my brother, and valued by us all;' and she speaks of his having unusual good sense and diffidence, which made him duly conscious of a lack of high educational culture. In the intervals when he was not at sea he spent much of his time at 'Mr. Champion's, and never seemed happy but when there.'

Pocock sometimes talked of giving up his sailor's life, to enable him to indulge his fine taste for drawing. When at sea his graphic talent was in constant exercise. 'Six volumes of journal, fair copied, and illustrated with charming drawings in Indian ink of the principal incident in each day, are' or were 'in the possession of Champion's grandsons. Some of the subjects are very artistic, and, though necessarily on a small scale, are always interesting. A gale, a calm, a vessel spoken or a sail in sight, or some object strange or new that arrested attention, never failed to be recorded by his facile pencil. Having commanded the *Lloyd*, and afterwards the *Minerva*, for some years, he carried his early resolutions into effect,' by leaving the sea and taking to the fine arts as a profession.<sup>1</sup> He was then about thirty years of age.

Redgrave says,<sup>2</sup> 'He drew portraits, landscapes, and sea-pieces, devoting himself chiefly to marine subjects,' and that 'in 1780 Sir Joshua Reynolds wrote him an encouraging letter, criticizing his first picture in oil, which had arrived at the Academy too late for exhibition.' His first exhibited works were in 1782, when he sent four to Somerset House. Two were portraits of ships, and two were views in or near Bristol. From that time he became a frequent exhibitor, and 'many an early sketch of scenery in South Carolina and the West India islands was turned to account.' A fine early picture from his pencil, representing 'Earl Rodney's victory over De Grasse<sup>3</sup> in the West Indies, 12th April, 1782,' is in the possession of the Bristol Society of Merchants. It was engraved in line by Francis Chesham, and published by Walker, 148 Fleet Street, 1 March, 1784, the above society subscribing ten guineas towards the expense.

<sup>1</sup> Hugh Owen's *Ceramic Art in Bristol* (1873), p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>3</sup> There is a large picture by Pocock at Greenwich of a previous repulse of the French under De Grasse in the same year, by Sir Samuel Hood's fleet, which took place at St. Kitt's in January 1782.

In 1789 Pocock left Bristol, where he had hitherto continued to reside, and settled in London. He had then married a wife, and begun to rear a family. Soon he rose to distinction as a painter of naval engagements, for which the long struggle for mastery at sea that followed the declaration of war with France in 1793, gave him only too ample a supply of subjects. Since 1796 Pocock had resided at No. 12 Great George Street, Westminster, where he enjoyed an extensive acquaintance with admirals and commanders of the navy. He had also in his visiting circle some of the theatrical celebrities of the day, including the Kembles and Mrs. Siddons.

A fine portrait of him by his son Isaac,<sup>1</sup> who had already established himself as a figure painter, represents Nicholas Pocock as of gentle aspect, with large dark eyes, generally handsome features, and a sensible expression.

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Pocock, besides being a painter, was also a dramatic author. He wrote the once popular melodrama 'The Miller and his Men.' There is a caricature portrait of N. Pocock in A. E. Chalon's drawing of 'Artists in the British Institution,' engraved in the *Portfolio*, Nov. 1884, p. 219.



## CHAPTER III

## NICHOLSON

*Francis Nicholson*—Autobiography—Birth and education—Want of sympathy—With Beckwith at York—With a copyist at Scarborough—At Pickering—Paints horses, dogs and game—Patrons—First visit to London—Paints seats and portraits—At Whitby—Takes to landscape—Mode of multiplying sketches—Exhibits in London—At Knaresborough—Fraudulent copies—Visit to Lord Bute in Scotland—At Ripon—Draws for Walker's magazine—Travels with Sir H. and Lady Tuile—Settles in London—Engaged in teaching—Power of water-colours—'Stopping-mixture'—Two impostors—Society of Arts and the drawing-masters.

THE next recruit was also past mid-age. He was an able landscape painter, whose works contribute to form some of the stronger links that unite the old school with the new, namely the Yorkshire artist before mentioned, 'Francis Nicholson.'

Nicholson lived to a grand old age, and died in 1844, long after the events we are now about to relate. In the latter end of his life he drew up for his children's gratification 'some account,' as he styled it, 'of my various employments during a period of eighty years and upwards, the time having been passed in my practice of the arts.' After the writer's death his son-in-law, the late Mr. T. Crofton Croker, F.S.A., had entertained the idea of printing the contents of this manuscript for circulation among friends. But this was not done, and after some ten or twelve years had elapsed it was thought by the family that these autobiographical sketches would not prove of sufficient general interest to justify their publication. Happily, however, Mr. Jenkins was favoured with a manuscript copy, from which most of the facts about to be related are taken, often in the words of the original. At the time when these notes were put together their author may have been right in assigning to them no more than a private interest, on the ground that the events described were 'what thousands of people before him must have been equally subject to in following the same pursuits.' But the very fact of their possessing this generic character gives them value in such a history

as the present, as affording a type of professional life during the period to which they refer. In making use of Nicholson's memoranda for the following account of his earlier career, the present compiler has therefore abstained from trimming too closely their margin of extraneous matter.

FRANCIS NICHOLSON was born on the 14th of November, 1753, at Pickering in Yorkshire, 'where,' says Redgrave, 'his family possessed a small property.' On his own evidence he was an industrious, painstaking lad, who, notwithstanding a manifest *penchant* or the pencil, would not suffer a good school training to be thrown away upon him. His practice in drawing began very early in life, the first attempt being a sketch of a ship made with a piece of chalk upon his 'Reading-made-easy.' 'My cousin, George Kirby,' says he, 'who sat next to me on the same form, having done one on his own book, I thought surely I could do that or anything that he could do.' From the preparatory school where this incident occurred he was sent to a secondary one to learn writing &c. Here his first attempts were not encouraging. He was called an awkward dog, that would never be good for anything. But the master who said so changed his opinion, and became proud of showing off the boy's progress in arithmetic and in drawing, prognosticating that he would be another 'Cozens, who went to London and became a famous draftsman.' This must mean Alexander Cozens, and tends to show the repute that artist enjoyed.

Middle-class education in Yorkshire seems to have stood pretty high even in the early days of King George the Third's reign, for young Nicholson was but ten years old when, in 1763, he was entered at the principal school in Pickering 'for instruction in arithmetic, geometry, trigonometry, astronomy, &c. This,' he adds, 'was the last of my schooling; and although a great part of what I had acquired could never be of much use to me, I did not consider the whole time lost, as I could work my questions and have time to draw also. I remember once the master was angry and rebuked me for doing too much; I being in decimals and applying for questions so often that he lost patience, saying, "Put it down, put it down! If I am to set questions as fast as you can work them, I shall have no time for anybody else. Shut up your book for the day."'

When the boy's school days were over, and it became necessary to settle his course of life, it was found that he had acquired a bent for

graphic art too strong to be resisted. Nicholson dates his determination to be an artist from the year 1760 (he was then but seven), when, happening to be sent on an errand and being shown into a room to await an answer, he cast his eye upon a portrait that hung there — ‘a portrait,’ he says, ‘I shall never forget, nor what passed in my mind respecting it, thinking, if I ever attained the power of doing anything like that, there was nothing in the world I should wish for, or be disturbed by, notwithstanding the increasing complaints of the hardness of the times and the difficulty of gaining a subsistence.’

But the poor fellow found himself in an unsympathetic world, among people who had not an idea beyond methods of tillage and the succession of crops. Such subjects were fluently discussed around him, but he could not attend to what was said or retain it in his mind, and so came to the sad conclusion that he differed from the rest of his species. His father regarded the exercise of the pencil as an idle amusement, and did his best to wean him from such a pursuit. After leaving school, therefore, our young artist was reduced to drawing by stealth. But he had a kind aunt, who furnished him with materials, and secreted him in a little back parlour, where he employed himself in copying prints. The son speaks tenderly of his parent’s natural prejudice in preferring ‘a good regular trade of any kind whatever’ to ‘a precarious fancy employment.’ ‘In that,’ says he, ‘he was not singular, the father of my friend Jackson<sup>1</sup> being of the same mind. When many of his friends endeavoured to prevail on him to allow his son to follow his inclination, it was long before he could be brought to consent to it. Dr. Harrison, of Kirby Moreside, his strong advocate, laboured hard to convince the old man how much better his son would do as an artist than he could ever hope to see him do by continuing to follow his own trade; but he ever replied, “He is as good a tailor as ever sat on a shop-board, and how can he do better?”’ Nicholson’s father did not remain obdurate, and when he at length consented to his son’s wish had the good sense to be as desirous to give him every assistance in his power as he had before been to obstruct him. There was no artist nearer than York, and even there but one, whose name was Beckwith. With him, therefore, young Nicholson was left for a month on trial. If the result should be satisfactory, he was to be apprenticed for seven

<sup>1</sup> The portrait painter, John Jackson, R.A., born at Lastingham in the North Riding of Yorkshire, 31 May, 1778.



years. Mr. Beckwith approved of the student's copy of an outline of a head which was placed before him to see what he could do—'approved of it, perhaps, too well,' says Nicholson, 'as it afterwards appeared. Though it was very little that I knew,' he adds, 'yet I could perceive that he was but a poor performer, but (his being the only instruction to be had) was very willing to be placed with him. In the month of trial he painted a small whole-length portrait of a gentleman. The picture seemed to me bad, having no effect, cutting in every part hard against the background, as though the figure had been put on by stencilling. I perfectly remember the feet; the shoes being black all over, and not foreshortened so as to appear standing upon the floor, but like an elongated ace of spades. So the figure stood upon the points of his toes. Yet the likeness in the face was obtained, which was the main point. The sitter was dressed in white cotton stockings, which Mr. B. objected to, as they would catch the eye, and he prevailed upon him to allow himself to be hosed in blue worsted.' Poor as Mr. B.'s painting was, he could talk about it fluently enough; and when Nicholson called upon him some years afterwards, he found him somewhat severe on the drawing of Sir Joshua. The proposed apprenticeship broke down, however, on grounds unconnected with art. Good motherly Mrs. Nicholson, on coming to see her boy, found out by shrewd questioning that he was poorly fed, and had to eke out his repasts by spending his pocket money at the baker's, and that the apprentices were still worse off, having to eat, instead of good brown bread, a coarse confection known by the name of 'Roger.'

Her husband in the mean time learned from a fellow-townsmen, one Mr. Stockton, then established at York as a chemist, that Beckwith wanted to have a clause inserted in the indenture by which the apprentice should be debarred from exercising his profession in that city. Mr. Nicholson sagaciously inferred that, if the master were already afraid of his pupil, he would never fulfil his duty as an instructor, but, on the contrary, do his best to keep him back. So the young artist was taken home again, very unwillingly on his part, though he had ever after great reason to be thankful for the escape from a sacrifice of seven good years of his life.

His parents now turned to Scarborough as affording the only chance of help. There was a nearly self-taught painter there, who had received some instruction from a crony of his, a clever but eccentric

travelling artist called Smirke. This Smirke had been induced by one of his countrymen to leave Carlisle, his native place, and come to Scarborough with his son, in the hope of finding good employment there in the spare season. Failing to do so, he went to London, and there apprenticed his son to Bromley the coach-painter in Long Acre. The son afterwards distinguished himself as a subject-painter, being no other than Robert Smirke, R.A., himself the father of a family of artists. As the Smirkes are known to have come to London in 1766, this gives us an approximate date for these events. Young Nicholson may have been about thirteen when he went to this Scarborough painter for tuition in art.

‘My instructor,’ he writes (without telling his name), ‘never painted an original subject, but succeeded very well as a copyist, and had done several from good old masters. He copied a Guido, the size of the original, as well as most artists would have done it; the subject being the daughter of Herodias bearing on a charger the head of John the Baptist. He painted every kind of subject, but his favourite was the horse, he having in his youth been a racing jockey. He always maintained that he never saw a picture he could not copy; which I think he would have done passing well. But he never had confidence to attempt more.’

After being three years at Scarborough, young Nicholson returned to Pickering to get what employment he could. The prospect was not very bright. ‘In my commencement,’ he writes, ‘I lost much time, being confined by circumstances during many years in a part of the country where works of art were scarcely to be found, and among a people utterly unable to appreciate such, if they had possessed them.’ But as there were in the neighbourhood several resident gentlemen, ‘nearly the whole being what are called sportsmen,’ young Nicholson was employed to paint the portraits of favourite horses, dogs, dead game, &c. Of the last he had good opportunities of painting from nature. Often, when these gentlemen killed game in a high state of beauty and fine plumage, it was sent to him for study. Occasionally he had a human sitter for a portrait; and he found himself comfortable, not only in having a good home, but kind friends. The chief of these was Thomas Hayes, Esq., a magistrate in the neighbourhood, at whose house the young artist was always welcome. A bed and a place at the table were his when he was there, and he would stay for weeks, and nearly at all times when he

had no other engagements. Of this hospitable patron he made several portraits, and he also painted those of Mrs. and Miss Hayes. 'I have,' he writes, 'a duplicate of his, and prize it next to that of my good and kind aunt.'

Nicholson had another much valued friend in Mr. Blomberg, a descendant of Baron Blomberg, who came over with George the First, and settled at Kirby Misperton, near Pickering. For him he painted several pictures, one of which, of dead game, was recognized long after by his brother, who also used the brush, and did the house-painting for the Rev. Dr. Blomberg, into whose possession the property had come on the death of Nicholson's patron. 'You seem to like that picture,' said the Doctor, observing that he was gazing upon it one day when he came to inspect his men's work. 'It is a great favourite of mine. I have no doubt it is an original, but so different from everything I have seen of the same subject, I cannot make out whom it is by, and should like very much to know.' 'I can inform you of that,' said the decorator; 'it was painted by my brother, when he lived with the rest of the family at Pickering, and he painted many more of the same kind for gentlemen in the neighbourhood.' 'I should like to know,' writes the artist, 'whether Dr. B. continued to view it as a favourite, or, what is more likely, sent it up into the garret.'

Mr. Blomberg also employed him to take portraits of his dogs, a task which gave him some trouble, by reason of the unwillingness of some of them to stand a steady gaze. An enormous house-dog of the Newfoundland breed was induced to sit to him twice, but never would come in his sight again if he could avoid it; always taking himself off to the house of a tenant, where he would stay a few days. If at his return the artist with the evil eye were gone, he remained at home; if not, he trotted back. The same was the case with several of the larger breeds. A favourite pointer, whose portrait he tried to take in the dining-room, fairly bolted through the window to avoid being stared at. 'But at terriers, harriers, or mongrels,' says Nicholson, 'I might have stared myself blind without their notice.' Thus he fagged on for about two years, all the time hating the country, 'where little was to be seen and nothing to be heard worth listening to,' and still feeling that he was like nobody, and nobody like him.

At last the long-wished-for time arrived when it was deemed necessary to send him to London for further instruction. There,



entering a new world of sympathy, he, to his astonishment and delight, met with hundreds of people like himself, who neither knew nor cared more about agriculture, cattle, manure, and tillage than he did. 'The Exhibition' being open (it must have been the Royal Academy in its old rooms in Pall Mall), he found 'plenty of subjects for study.' But it is curiously illustrative of our proverbial contempt for things familiar, that at that time Nicholson, afterwards best known for excellence in rural landscape, nurtured as he was among the very scenes that were to inspire the poetic feelings of a Turner and a Girtin, besides a host of lesser artists, should add the following confession: 'One class was little attended to. When the finest landscapes of Wilson, Barret, and others were pointed out to my notice, I only said, "I hate to look at them, they are so like the country."'

While in London, Nicholson took some lessons from Metz, 'a German artist who drew the figure extremely well,' who procured for him several good pictures, which he copied, one in particular, 'Jason destroying the Dragon,' by Salvator.<sup>1</sup> Smirke also, with whom he became acquainted, being frequently with him at Bromley's, procured for him from different friends several pictures to copy.

After about seven months in London, being unable to obtain means of recruiting his now exhausted funds, he had to return to the country, disliking it more than ever. When he gets back to Yorkshire he begins the same kind of practice, out of which we have already seen so much of the school of water-colour landscape to have taken its rise. In addition to the favourite horses and dogs which had constituted the only subjects which the country gentlemen had called upon him to paint, he now mentions a demand for 'views about their places of residence.' There being no one else to paint these subjects, the whole fell to Nicholson's share. After a good deal of such practice he was able to get nine more months in London, during which he 'did many things,' and then, returning to Pickering, found employment as before. He now for the first time speaks of making what were probably water-colour drawings. 'At Scampston, the seat of Sir William St. Quintin, I made for him a set of drawings of the

<sup>1</sup> 'Many years afterwards,' adds Nicholson, 'being settled in London, I was engaged to give lessons in drawing to Miss Smith, a daughter of Mr. Smith, many years M.P. for the county of Norfolk. He had collected many excellent pictures. One of them was the Jason I had copied.'

house and grounds—another for the Lord of the Manor, Mr. Hill, of his seat and grounds ; also several pictures in oil of his horses and dogs. From the best of my friends, Mr. Hayes, I had employment of several kinds, and painted for him the ceiling of a large summer-house in his garden, filled with mythological figures. The subject is the triumph of Britannia. This employed me 7 or 8 months. If I could see it now, it would doubtless be with a desire to brush it out.’

He also painted portraits when he could get a sitter. That Nicholson had some of the social tact essential to a successful career in this line, is evinced in the following amusing account of the sittings he received, about this time, from a certain Captain H. Clarke. One day this gentleman observed how unfortunate he had been in sitting to thirteen different artists, not one of whom succeeded in producing a likeness. His features were marked, and he had a dark, florid complexion. ‘Not apprehending any difficulty,’ says Nicholson, ‘I was desirous to try, and proposed to take a couple of sittings for a head only. If that proved satisfactory I would paint a half-length. This he agreed to. At the first sitting it was clear enough why he never had a likeness from any of the thirteen, he being not only a very bad sitter, but having a nervous twitching of the face like Mathews the late professor of trickery. He would start up to object to this as too dark, that too red, &c. In short he did everything except taking the pencils from me and painting himself. I was now certain that nothing could be done unless I bestowed upon him a very flattering complexion. On my assurance that he should be perfectly satisfied, he was prevailed upon to give me a second sitting. The likeness having been got sufficiently to enable me to proceed with the half-length, it was begun, and the head considerably advanced, before a further sitting was required. He approved of the very nice complexion given to him, and the work went on smoothly. When finished, it was thought very like. He took every means to be satisfied that it was so, by showing it to everybody who came to the house. I never heard but one critical remark. It was from a man who said it was very like, yet he thought there was something or other about the cheek not quite right. The critic having been many years Captain Clarke’s barber and hairdresser, was doubtless a competent judge of that part. Soon I had the pleasure of seeing it splendidly framed and hung in his dining-room.’ Another of Nicholson’s sitters would hardly be pleased. On seeing the work of the first sitting, he called out, ‘Why,

it squints !' ' I assured him,' says the painter, ' that he was mistaken, and that it squinted no more than he did, which was true. It did not squint half as much.'

In 1783, Nicholson, then thirty years of age, went to Whitby, with the intention of staying there to get such employment as might be offered. He had been induced to try the place by the Captain Clarke above mentioned, who could be of service to him in that locality. There he painted several portraits, and there he took unto himself a wife. There too, at length, in the Mulgrave woods, his mind was opened to the charms of picturesque scenery, and from that time he became the Francis Nicholson known to students of water-colour landscape. Recalling, in old age, the scenes wherein he then made for Constantine, Lord Mulgrave, a collection of sketches of the ruins of the old castle, the modern mansion, grounds, &c., he writes : ' The place is very picturesque ; the old castle standing on an elevated ridge having a deep ravine on each side well wooded, and about the bottom rocky. Through the eastern dell a rivulet runs over a rocky bed, dashing about very beautifully. At the end of this ravine is a corn mill, and immediately below it a large and well-formed group of rocks, all as they had fallen naturally, being far too massive to be placed artificially.' Barret and Wilson would surely no longer have been distasteful to him as reminders of the country.

At Whitby he works hard, beginning with the daylight, and sitting sixteen hours a day, and many times a great part of the night. Perhaps indeed his art would have been the better for more sketching from nature, and less of midnight oil. But he has found his vocation as a landscape draftsman, and is bent on securing a market for works which he can produce in quick succession. There was not much to be got from the Whitby public, but at Scarborough, ' during the spaw season,' his drawings had a ready sale. And going several times to London by sea, he found connections there also, and obtained unlimited orders for as many drawings as he could furnish. The shrewd Yorkshireman had a cunning way of keeping his wares in request. ' My plan was,' said he, ' to have two strings to my bow, being by that means independent ; and say to the country people, " If you do not like what I have done, it is very well ; I can readily dispose of it in London." There, on the other hand, I could at any time say, " If you are not satisfied with what is offered, let it alone ; it will be sold in the country."' Nicholson had also at this time a



canny method of multiplying his works. 'For Scarborough,' he writes, 'I manufactured an incredible number of drawings. My process was by etching on a soft ground the different views of the place, from which were taken impressions with black lead. This produced outlines so perfectly like those done by the pencil, that it was impossible to discover any difference. This was nearly half of the work, and in the long days of summer I finished them at the rate of six daily.'

After working thus at Whitby for nine years, during which we find him beginning also, from 1789, to send drawings to the London exhibitions, he made an excursion to Knaresborough, and was so much delighted with the place that he determined to remove to it on the next quarter day, and did so accordingly ;<sup>1</sup> tenanting a house which his pleasant description may serve to identify if it still exists. It was, he says, 'in a most beautiful situation, the front facing the river, and separated from it only by the breadth of the road. The opposite bank of the river was rising ground and closely wooded down to the water. Through this plantation a long gravelled walk was formed from the upper [side ?] on the Harrowgate Road passing the back of the dripping rock to the lower bridge. From this place, to a public house said to have been the residence of the Yorkshire sibyl Mother Shipton, a path was formed leading to the foot of the rock. From the front of my house the view to the right was up the river ; to the left, a high rock, most perpendicular, well wooded in the parts about the bottom ; and upon the summit the ruins of the castle. The only unsightly [object] in the view down the river was a huge cotton mill, which in my drawings was always removed, and a former old corn mill restored to its place. Probably,' he adds, 'it may be down ere now, as we learn by the depression of trade the place is nearly ruined, and that good houses may be had for next to nothing.'

Nicholson had good friends at Knaresborough, among whom he mentions Dr. Garnet and Mr. Broadbelt, but no actual patrons. He declared that, after staying there upwards of three years, spending his money in the place, he had never received the value of a shilling from any person in it in return. His market was at Harrogate. He had three or four frames of drawings always on view in the reading-room of the bookseller there. When a drawing was sold, it was taken out of the frame and replaced by another. From Harro-

<sup>1</sup> This would be about the year 1792, when he was thirty-nine.

gate he had numerous visitors, sometimes three or four at his door in the course of the morning, and several of them brought him employment.

Thus he became conspicuous enough to be worth stigmatizing for his independence of character. Having refused, though called upon by two of the chief magistrates of the district, Sir Thomas Slingsby and Justice Watson, to support a war of which he did not approve, by subscribing for blankets for the Duke of York's army in Holland, he was publicly denounced by the former as a 'rank Jacobin.' 'Being no more a Jacobin,' he said, 'than Sir T. himself; and knowing how people of his caste were terrified by the name of a Jacobin, however obscure, I was rather pleased than otherwise. I therefore had small cause to care for them, from Sir T. down to the parish beadle.'

Nicholson's manner of drawing was now sufficiently known, and his works were in such repute that it was thought worth a dealer's while to pass off copies of them for originals, the supply thereof to the metropolis not being equal to the demand. In or about 1793, when he was residing at Knaresborough, a friend, Mr. Carr, a merchant at Leeds, informed him that he had seen in a frame-maker's window in London two or three palpable copies of drawings by him. On Mr. Carr's remonstrating with the man who had exposed them for sale, the dealer admitted that when the artist's original drawings were sent to him to be framed, he set people to make copies of them. He should be very glad, he said, to get originals; but that Nicholson, having come into possession of considerable property, now worked very little. On another occasion, Nicholson himself was shown by Archdeacon Markham at York a stranger's drawing, on a mount with his own autograph at the back. His drawing had been removed by some fraudulent person, and a copy substituted. Thus tricks of the trade are not all of recent date.

It is not always, however, that a copy is inferior to the original. Nicholson once saw in a shop window in Maddox Street a copy of a drawing of his of the Dripping Rock at Knaresborough, which he preferred to his own work, and would have bought had it been for sale; but it was only sent there to be framed. He describes it as exactly similar, but richer and more highly finished in the details; the foreground plants in particular being made out so as to satisfy a botanist, while the effect and breadth of every part were preserved.

Among the visitors from Harrogate came a distinguished patron,

Lord Bute. Being at the time in great trouble on the death of his eldest son, Lord Mountstuart, by a fall from his horse, he seems to have found relief in quietly watching our artist at his easel. 'He came,' says Nicholson, 'almost daily from thence in the morning, and, sitting by me, was amused by seeing my work go forward, never taking up my attention nor interrupting me in it. He usually stayed through the day, until his dinner hour, when he returned to Harrowgate.' Finally Lord Bute took all the drawings done under his inspection, and engaged Nicholson to go to the Isle of Bute and make sketches of a set of views in various parts of the island. His account of this trip must be related as nearly as possible in the artist's own words:—

'My route to the island,' he writes, 'was made out for me. I was to go to Glasgow; from thence to Greenock, where I should get a passage in a packet going daily to Bute.

'I was landed at Rothsay, the port of Bute, where I immediately became an informer and reformer. On my arrival at Mountstuart, Lord B. inquired if the journey had been pleasant. I told him: "It was so until I got to Greenock, afterwards not so." On his asking why it was not, I told him: "On engaging a passage from thence, the captain directed me to be on board at two o'clock. In the meantime I made a sketch. I might have done more, for on going at the appointed time, I found the vessel hard aground, and the captain could not possibly sail at the time he appointed, or any other until she floated, which was not before six. Upwards of twenty passengers were on deck, where we were compelled to remain through the night. There was no shelter of any kind, the vessel being filled with goods up to the top of the companion ladder. However, we suffered nothing, the night proving favourable." Lord Bute rang the bell, and on the appearance of a servant, asked if Mr. May (the steward) was in the house. Being told he was, he desired to see him. He inquired of Mr. May: "What share have I in the Rothsay packet?" I forget what the answer was; but he told him to fit out another vessel directly, for without competition the public could never be well served.

'Lord Bute went with me about the island and port to select subjects. At Rothsay he was pestered by apparently one of the chief people, who solicited him for assistance towards the repair of the pier, observing it would be a very pleasant walk whenever his



lordship might come down to the port. His lordship looked very gruff, and pointing out a long row of trees on the beach, with a shady walk under the branches, replied as gruffly: "Do you think, while there is such a place as that, I should be such a fool as to walk on a bare and exposed stone wall?" The man slunk back and looked rather foolish.

'When I had made a number of sketches on the island, Lord Bute had a revenue cutter brought up the Clyde to Mountstuart, where we embarked, coasting and sketching among the other islands in the Clyde. It then appeared that Lord Bute had another object in view, which was to raise recruits for the Government. Being off Arran, Mr. May went on shore, returning the next morning. He told his lordship that he had been unsuccessful, and not able to procure a single man. Lord Bute said: "Won't money tempt them?" "Not at all," was the answer, and that, to avoid compulsion, many of the inhabitants were preparing to leave the country.'

Our artist had been greatly pleased with the scenery of Bute. He found it to 'abound with subjects for the pencil; always with grand objects in the distance; Goatfell, the wildest part of the Isle of Arran, being only nine miles from Bute; the forms very grand, and in that climate so distinctly seen that the breadth of the water between them seemed to be not more than two or three miles.'

Soon after his return from Scotland, Nicholson removed from Knaresborough to Ripon, the scenery about which, with Studley Royal and Fountains Abbey, seems to have had a special charm for him.

There was a strolling company of comedians that used to make their circuit in that part of the country, staying from six to eight weeks at each station in succession, and Ripon was one of their stations. Nicholson chanced to make acquaintance with one of the musicians attached to the company, named William Tayleure; and finding that he was very fond of drawing, kindly told him that, as he had all the day at his disposal, being wanted in the orchestra at night only, he might, if he would apply himself diligently to the art, not only have any of his own works to copy, but the benefit of all the instruction he could give him. The offer was gladly accepted, and Tayleure worked very closely in the two or three seasons during which Nicholson continued to reside at Ripon. What became of this aspirant will appear in the sequel.

From Ripon, Nicholson made excursions through Wensleydale and the lesser dales opening into it on each side; also to Swaledale, Wharfedale, Malham, &c., and Brimham rocks. He had already furnished a few drawings to the Walkers for their 'Copper Plate Magazine,' the first of the plates from them being dated 1 Aug. 1792. Among them is a view of Ripon, published 1 Aug. 1793, but this must have been executed while he still hailed from Knaresborough.<sup>1</sup>

While residing at Knaresborough he had formed a valuable acquaintance with Sir Henry and Lady Tuite, an Irish couple, who were staying at Harrogate, having left their estate near Mullingar in consequence of the disturbed state of West Meath. With them he made the tour of the English Lakes, and for several years passed a considerable time in various places, never idly, but always working as at home. 'I was with them,' he says, 'about two months at Bath; in the next year a longer time at Clifton; next in Wimpole Street, London, and in the following year in Lower Grosvenor Street.' Sir Henry he describes as an ardent pedestrian when on his travels, and 'as kind-hearted a gentleman as ever crossed the Irish Channel, exceedingly good-tempered, and at all times the same.' Nicholson did not get on quite so well with her ladyship, who induced him to remove to the neighbourhood of London, and become tenant of a house and garden at Weybridge, adjoining and included in a purchase which the Tuites had made there for their own residence. The Nicholsons were to have it rent-free, with mutton at cost price killed on the estate, and divers other advantages. These privileges, however, either proved illusory or were gradually withdrawn, and Nicholson after a while came to the

<sup>1</sup> The following plates after Francis Nicholson are in Walker's *Copper Plate Magazine*:—

- Plate 13. Greenwich Hospital, by W. & J. Walker, 1 Aug. 1792.  
 „ 22. Rivalx Abbey, by W. & J. Walker, 1 Dec. 1792.  
 „ 37. Rippon, by J. Walker, 1 Aug. 1793.  
 „ 49. Malton, by Walker & Storer, 1 Feb. 1794.  
 „ 73. York, by Walker, 1 Feb. 1795.  
 „ 112. Low Harrogate, by J. Walker, 1 Sep. 1796.  
 „ 148. Dropping Well, by J. Walker, 1 March, 1798.  
 „ 151. Edinburgh, by J. Walker, 1 May, 1798.  
 „ 154. Stoke Gifford, by J. Walker, 1 June, 1798.  
 „ 176. King's Weston, by J. Walker, 1 May, 1799.  
 „ 180. Bristol, by J. Walker, 1 July, 1799.  
 „ 188. Kirkstall Abbey, by J. Walker, 1 Nov. 1799.  
 „ 202. Knaresborough, by J. Walker & J. Grieg, 2 June, 1800.  
 „ 235. Castle Howard, by J. Walker, 2 Nov. 1801.

conclusion that he could live better and cheaper in London itself. So he removed to Somers Town, and afterwards to No. 10 Titchfield Street, where he had purchased the house in which we find him residing at the time of the formation of the Water-Colour Society. He was by that time settled in a good practice, and, like others of his craft, he gave lessons to amateurs.

He was one of the draftsmen of his time who most aimed at extending and strengthening the scope and power of water-colour painting, in which endeavour his early practice in oil was no doubt of service to him. His friend Smirke, whose ideas of water-colour were limited to stained drawing, thought he was attempting too much, and contended that it could never bear a comparison with oil. But Nicholson thought otherwise. While engaged, as before mentioned, in teaching drawing to Miss Smith,<sup>1</sup> he suggested that, as his pupil had made considerable progress, she might derive more advantage from making copies of the excellent pictures in her father's gallery than from such works as he himself could produce. 'Choose any you like,' said Mr. Smith, agreeing to the proposal. Nicholson selected 'Rembrandt's Mill.' 'Is it possible,' inquired the possessor, 'to produce by water-colours anything like the strength and depth of that picture? But if you like it try.' 'We did so,' said Nicholson, 'and when the copies were finished he was highly pleased, and desirous that we should proceed on the plan by going on with Wilson's "Celadon and Amelia," which was equally satisfactory to him.' An attempt was afterwards made to steal Nicholson's copy of the Rembrandt by a stranger, who, while the family were in the country, called at Mr. Smith's house in Park Street on a pretended commission from the artist to take it away. A similar trick had been successful at a neighbour's house in Mayfair.

The method of giving force and an effect as of *impasto* to his high lights, which was a characteristic part of Nicholson's practice,<sup>2</sup> and whereof an account, communicated by him, was published in the Transactions of the Society of Arts in 1799, was employed by him

<sup>1</sup> Mr. William Smith of Norwich, warmly aided Lord Dover in the formation of the National Gallery. (Cunningham's *Lives*, vi. : Sir George Beaumont.)

<sup>2</sup> One of the greatest difficulties at that time in producing richness of effect and clearness of execution arose from the practice of laying the lightest tint of a drawing as the first stage, and thus deepening the parts by degrees. By the process of Nicholson, the darker colours were laid first, next the forms destined to sustain the lights were taken out.' (Papworth MS.)



before he settled in London. That he had made some secret of the process is shown by the following story, which he tells, of another attempt at fraud. While staying with Sir Henry and Lady Tuite in Grosvenor Square, he became acquainted with a drawing-master of the name of Pierson, who often came to him, and seemed always eager to do him any service in his power, fetching and carrying for him anything from or to any part of the town, and being frequently with him while he was at work. 'I did not apprehend,' says Nicholson, 'that he would understand some parts of my practice, such as stopping out the lights.' He was therefore left sometimes alone in the room, when he took advantage of the opportunity of examining the artist's materials, including his stopping-mixture, and then made an imitation of his drawing, and took it to the Society of Arts, got a specification, entered in his name in their books, and claimed a premium. Barry, the Academician, 'ever,' says Nicholson, 'the bitter enemy of quacks and jugglers of every description,' happening to be present when this claim came on for adjudication, informed the meeting that he was acquainted with the inventor, whose works were very different from those produced by the present claimant, whom he proceeded to denounce as an impostor. Judgment was therefore suspended until Nicholson should have been informed of what had taken place. Our artist, on hearing of it, went to the Adelphi and told Mr. More, the secretary, that if the candidate was, as he suspected, William Pierson, the man had stolen the little he knew from the informant. 'I am not at liberty,' said the secretary, with official caution, 'to give you the name; but, to satisfy my own curiosity, I will look at the entry.' 'I stood opposite,' says Nicholson. 'The entry was made in a large round hand. I had no difficulty in reading upside down that "William Pierson having by great labour and expense invented, &c." Mr. More closed the book, saying, "Well, sir, if you are disposed to make your claim, send in a specimen of your performance. You may depend on having full justice done you." There was no competition, Pierson having cut and run on the day of Barry's exposure.'

This was not, however, the only disciple of whom Nicholson had reason to complain. We have seen how, when in Yorkshire, he played off against one another his town and country customers; and how, when he was drawing for the Harrogate folk, and his works got scarce in London, the town dealers, to sell their copies, fabricated a report that he had come into an estate, and was giving up the brush. So,

too, now that he had deserted the country market, and found his chief patrons in town, a more injurious rumour was spread in Yorkshire with a similar object. The story was that he had taken to drinking, and that his works were very inferior to what he had done formerly. Nicholson heard this report, and could not imagine how it had arisen ; until one of his best friends, Colonel Machell, of Beverley, discovered that, since he had left Yorkshire, the frames wherein he used to show his drawings at the Harrogate library, which were marked with his name, had been utilized by a rogue, who placed his own drawings there, pretending that they came from Nicholson, and no doubt explaining their inferiority by the above ingenious fiction. This impostor was his old pupil, William Tayleure. The ungrateful wretch was now settled as a drawing-master at Beverley, where Colonel Machell had been very kind and of great service to him. When Nicholson was on a visit to the Colonel, he called upon his former pupil, and taking him for a walk into the fields, charged him with his dishonesty. The culprit turned pale as death, and when he had recovered the power of speech, would have stammered out a denial. 'Don't attempt that,' said Nicholson. 'My information is derived from Colonel Machell, who has been your good friend as well as mine, and is incapable of saying anything he cannot prove. However, to show you how little I can be affected by such reports, having nothing to do with the country, I am at my return to send some drawings to Colonel Machell, and will desire that he will permit you to inspect them. I shall be glad if you can derive any advantage from them.' He was so bitterly grieved that Nicholson had not the heart to reproach him further. Finally, the poor fellow himself took to drinking, lost the best part of his employment, and died a few years afterwards.

It was while Nicholson resided in Titchfield Street, but before the birth of the Water-Colour Society, that he was again brought into contact with the Society of Arts, and became the means of checking a system which showed that the drawing-masters by this time constituted a somewhat powerful clique. The members of the Committee of Polite Arts at the Adelphi, having hopelessly differed in opinion as to the merits of the works sent in by candidates for the premiums offered by the Society, agreed to refer the decision to an artist who had no connexion with any of them ; and Nicholson was selected for that purpose. He had already had some reason to suspect the purity of this Committee's awards. Before this, when he was residing in Somers Town, he had made several drawings for Barber, afterwards Barber-

Beaumont, the miniature painter, with whom he was acquainted. Barber 'advised me,' he says, 'to send a drawing by my eldest daughter Sophia to the Society of Arts for a premium; to which I objected that she had not sufficient practice to have any chance of gaining one. He replied, "I will assure her of that, being one of the Committee of Polite Arts." I am persuaded,' adds Nicholson, 'that this juggling practice has been carried on from the time when the Society first offered premiums, to the present.' At the time now referred to, the whole of the Committee were drawing-masters, each of whom had a natural partiality for the works of his own pupils. Unaware of this Nicholson went to an evening meeting, and there observed what is sufficiently stated in the following letter, which he wrote to the Secretary, Mr. More, the next morning: 'Sir,—Having been requested to attend the Committee of the Fine Arts, I did so yesterday. The consideration of Mr. Marchant's report occupying the whole of the evening, the subject on account of which I attended was not gone into; but I had an opportunity, by examining the drawings of the candidates for premiums in the department of drawing, to observe that the Society is subject to great imposition; and of the worst tendency, as it gives to young persons of real merit a very unfavourable and unfair trial, in opposition to those who are not ashamed to send in works in which was little of their own. Having had the honour to be favourably noticed by the Society on a former occasion, and at the time had the pleasure of preventing the gross imposition of a fraudulent claim upon it, feeling it as much my duty as it is my wish to expose such attempts whenever it may be in my power, I trust this communication will not be deemed impertinent. It will rest with the Society to devise some method of ascertaining whether the specimens given in were really the works of the candidates, several of which I am convinced in many of their parts they are not.' Nicholson received the thanks of the Society, but was desired to substantiate his statement. As the result might have been unpleasant in the absence of further evidence than his own opinion, he called upon his brother draftsman, John Varley, as having a more extensive acquaintance than any other person he could apply to, and related the circumstances to him. Varley, besides being an excellent artist, was a keen observer of men. Taking a mental survey of the profession, he bethought him of a popular teacher called Baynes.<sup>1</sup> 'Baynes,' he said, 'has a great many

<sup>1</sup> 'James Baynes, water-colour painter, born at Kirkby Lonsdale, April 1766,



pupils. He's a poor nervous creature ; and I'll charge him so bluntly that he will hardly attempt to evade my question.' And off he went in search of the supposed culprit. 'Why, Baynes,' said he, when he found him, 'you have got me into a sad hobble with the Society of Arts. By some means they've discovered that some of the drawings sent in by candidates were worked upon by you.' 'How could I avoid it?' answered Baynes ; 'they were those of my pupils. Besides, it is well known to be the practice of the masters.' Varley accompanied Nicholson to the Adelphi on the appointed morning. There they found several of the members, with 'the Professor Barry' among them, and the whole of the Committee of the Fine Arts. 'Good morning, Mr. Warren,' says Nicholson to the chairman. 'Humph !' was the answer, as the person addressed turned on his heel. He accosted another with the same result. 'What can be the matter?' thought he, 'and why am I sent to Coventry?' The only question asked was by Barry, who said, 'How do you know that these are not the entire work of the candidates?' 'By the difference of the handling,' answered Nicholson. 'The hand that did this could not possibly do that. The first is evidently the work of a beginner. The other shows a hand of great practice. It is useless,' added he, 'to consider this as a matter of opinion. My friend Mr. Varley can prove the truth of what I stated to the Society, and accompanies me here for that purpose.' 'Having done that,' he adds, 'we returned home, having no further business there.' 'I soon learned,' he continues, 'that the whole of the Committee were to a man drawing-masters, and were blown up sky high by my letter to Mr. More.' Soon afterwards a resolution was entered on the Society's books requiring every candidate to give proof that the drawing sent in was entirely the production of the claimant, by his being placed alone in a room and there making a drawing or such parts of one as would satisfy the Society that the claim was fair.<sup>1</sup> 'This mode of trial,' observes Nicholson, 'is good, but how is it to be carried into practice? It is clear that a set of drawing-masters are, of all others, the most unfit to decide, being themselves interested. If a member of the Society were competent to do the business it might work well, but no artist would undertake so troublesome and thankless an office.'

had several pupils who gained a name in art. He died 1837.' (Redgrave's *Dictionary*.)

<sup>1</sup> There are points in the foregoing recital that can scarcely fail to recall to the reader's mind the evidence in a recent *cause célèbre* respecting the originality of certain works of plastic art.

## CHAPTER IV

## THE VARLEYS ; NATTES ; AND GILPIN

*John Varley*—A leader in the school—*Cornelius Varley*—Of scientific tastes—Their birth and parentage—John's character and early life—At Barrow's school—Sketches with Neale—Private theatricals—Tossed by a bull—Topographic tours and drawings—With Dr. Monro—First studio and patrons—Early exhibits—Visits to Wales—Havell and C. Varley's palette—J. Varley's first marriage—Addresses—*J. C. Nattes*—Topographic draftsmen—Engraved works—*W. S. Gilpin*—Drawing-master—Birth and family—Sawrey Gilpin, R.A.—Rev. W. Gilpin.

THE JOHN VARLEY who came to Nicholson's aid in effecting the above-mentioned exposure, was also one of his coadjutors in the scheme now afoot for a water-colour exhibition. He was about half the age of our Yorkshire painter, but was already established in London as a water-colour draftsman of good repute. He lived and painted during the forty years next to come, and was destined to be regarded as a leading member of the school, and to furnish moreover, in the soundness of his teaching, the very backbone of its landscape art. At present we are concerned with his earlier life only, to the time when, in 1804, he and his younger brother, CORNELIUS VARLEY, came forward as two more of the six recruits who joined the new movement.

The scientific tastes of the latter, as well as the philosophic way in which the former dealt with the methods of his art, prepare us to learn that these artists came of intellectual parentage. Their father, Richard Varley, 'the first though the younger of the Varleys who came from Epworth in Lincolnshire,'<sup>1</sup> was at one time settled in Yorkshire, where he married and had two sons ; but his wife dying, and his circumstances not being prosperous, he travelled to London, leaving these two children in the care of his wife's family. Redgrave in the *Dictionary* calls him 'a man of very scientific attainments,' and states that he 'became tutor to Lord Stanhope's son.' But this account seems rather to belong to his elder brother, Samuel Varley,

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Cornelius Varley, 10 Dec. 1842. J. J. MSS. Epworth appears by the maps to be really in Notts, about three miles from the border of Lincoln.

who, as he tells us, was a 'manufacturer of philosophical instruments and apparatus,' and who, though 'a self-taught man, became the leader and lecturer of a society for the investigation of natural science, of which Josiah Wedgwood and other distinguished men were members.'<sup>1</sup>

John Varley was one of a family of five, three boys and two girls, all born in a large house, where their father resided, at Hackney, abutting on the churchyard. John's birthday was the 17th of August, 1778, and Cornelius's the 21st of November, 1781. So the one was twenty-six, and the other twenty-three, in the eventful year 1804.

John, from his infancy, was fonder of drawing than of any other occupation. He was distinguished among his schoolfellows, not only by possessing this talent, but by a degree of muscular strength which exceeded that of nearly all other lads of his age. 'The latter qualification gained him both friends and enemies, for he could never see a boy tormented or oppressed by another without interfering, and with all the ardent generosity of an amiable disposition and great courage would fight any boy of his acquaintance in the cause of justice, no matter how much older or stronger than himself. The consequence was that in a short time scarce any in the neighbourhood would fight him alone; and once, when, upon some trifling occasion which produced a quarrel, *three* attacked him at once, he maintained the unequal combat for several minutes, and declined any interference, till the lookers-on insisted on rescuing him. He then fought his three antagonists singly and punished them all.'<sup>2</sup>

Young Varley's father, like Nicholson's, would not hear of his following his natural inclination. Limning, he said, was a bad trade, and none of his children should be artists. But 'l'homme propose et Dieu dispose.' All his sons in after years took to the brush; for the third, William Fleetwood Varley, born in 1785, also followed the arts, with less of the ability, but all the enthusiasm, of his elder brothers. Their sister Elizabeth, too, married the painter Mulready; and the family name and talent have been and continue to be represented in younger generations. Under his father's mandate, John was accordingly placed, at the age of thirteen, with a silversmith, on trial for an apprenticeship. But before the son could be bound apprentice, the father died, on the 17th of November, 1791.

After this event, the family seem to have gone down in the world,

<sup>1</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 25 Oct. 1873. Obituary notice of Cornelius Varley.

<sup>2</sup> Manuscript lent by the late Edgar J. Varley, John Varley's grandson.



for instead of their remaining in the large house at Hackney, we find John Varley residing, a few years later, with his widowed mother and his brothers and sisters, in an obscure court, opposite St. Luke's Hospital, in Old Street. There is a story that, when still a boy, he was engaged by a stockbroker named Trower to clean and sweep out his office. This Mr. Trower was in the habit of sketching on scraps of paper, and throwing them on the ground. Young Varley took to copying some of these. By some chance a copy came to the sight of his employer, who told the boy it was so well done, that he had better take to drawing. And ever after Mr. Trower and his family assisted Varley.

For a short time after his father's death, John Varley was placed with a law stationer. It seemed, however, quite impossible that he could accustom himself to the regular drudgery of any such occupation, and, one fine morning, having expended his slender stock of money in paper and pencils, with the exception of three halfpence, he set off on his first sketching excursion. His mother saw nothing of him for some days, when he returned, with sketches of Hampstead and Highgate, absolutely driven home by hunger.<sup>1</sup> 'Mrs. Varley, who had more taste for the arts than her husband, regretted that her son's inclination had been so long opposed, and now encouraged him to draw and study, and gave him all the assistance her humble means permitted.'<sup>2</sup> Thus left at liberty, the youth resolved to support himself by his pencil if he could. With determined industry he set to work at drawing whatever came in his way, copying figures, making sketches of animals, and exhibiting a self-acquired ability which delighted his friends and acquaintances, some of whom encouraged him to design subjects also, by making an occasional purchase. As he was always drawing, his mother used to say, 'When Johnny marries, it will be to a paper wife.'

Eager for practice and instruction, he got some employment, for a while, with a portrait painter in Holborn ; and, at the age of fifteen or sixteen, he succeeded in placing himself with a teacher of the name of Joseph Charles Barrow, who had an evening drawing-school twice a week at his house at No. 12 Furnival's Inn Court, Holborn.

<sup>1</sup> Cornelius Varley. MS. The late Mr. E. J. Varley had a water-colour drawing by his grandfather, partly washed, and partly in local colour, of a waggon and some houses at Cambridge ; and it has been conjectured that he may have got so far and made this study during a truant trip.

<sup>2</sup> Cornelius Varley. MS.

Varley was to make himself generally useful, not only during the hours of study, as a lower kind of assistant, but also as an errand boy and otherwise at odd times. In return, he had the advantage of drawing with the other pupils, and he was moreover furnished with prints from which he studied, and encouraged to draw from nature. Francia, one of Girtin's fellow-sketchers, was, as above mentioned, an assistant here also; but in a higher capacity than that of John Varley.

'Poor Varley,' writes one who knew him well at this time, 'began the world with tattered clothes, and shoes tied with string to keep them on. Yet nothing,' he adds, 'could damp the ardour of this determined, great man. He was ever with his pencil, either drawing from nature, or copying the works of distinguished masters. He rose early, drew till it was time to attend his situation, and set off with a large ragged portfolio, and a string over his shoulder attached to it head first, at a full trot until he arrived at his master's.' 'So great an enthusiast I never, in the whole of my long practice, beheld.'

The writer of the above was John Preston Neale, a fellow-artist, who, though about seven years his senior, did not take to the profession himself until a later period. He is best known as an architectural topographic draftsman for engraved works.<sup>1</sup> Neale 'began life as a clerk in the Post-Office,'<sup>2</sup> but seems to have spent his leisure in the pursuit of tastes inherited from his father, who painted insects. 'It was early in March 1796,' he writes, 'that I went on Sunday morning to Hornsey wood to sketch and to collect insects.' There he met with John Varley, sketching likewise. They entered into conversation, and so commenced a friendly intercourse, which lasted during their joint lives.

Thus thrown together, they became frequent companions. Neale, however, could not inoculate Varley with his taste for entomology, the energies of the latter being otherwise directed. But he persuaded him to join in a project for a work on natural history, of ambitious dimensions. It was to be in royal quarto, and they called it the *Picturesque Cabinet of Nature*. It was to consist of landscapes, beasts, birds, insects, flowers, &c., &c. Varley was to make all the

<sup>1</sup> He made drawings for the following works: *History and Antiquities of the Abbey Church at Westminster* (1818-23), *Views of the most interesting Collegiate and Parochial Churches* (1824-25), *Views of the Seats of the Nobility and Gentry of the United Kingdom* (1st series, 1822-24, 2nd series, 1829). He died in 1847, aged 76. (Redgrave's *Dictionary*.)

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave.

landscape drawings ; and Neale to etch them, as well as to make all the others and colour the plates. The first number was produced, and consisted of three prints, horses, cows, and an ass. It was published on the 1st of September, 1796. But we hear nothing of No. 2, or of any landscape by Varley.

Neale gives the following graphic description of one of his sketching excursions with his young companion in this same year. It was on a fine Sunday morning in the spring of 1796, that John Varley and he sallied forth in search of the picturesque. ‘About 7 A.M. we reached the private Mad-house at Hoxton, and as the foliage was beautiful round its banks, we sat down to copy their beauties. We had been seated but a short period, when we began to frighten each other by tales regarding the unhappy persons confined within this sad abode. Suddenly a terrible rush was heard among the trees and bushes. Having previously raised our fears to highest pitch, we stayed not to inquire the cause ; but scrambling up, made a precipitate retreat to the middle of the field, where we stopped to watch the supposed maniacs that were making their escape. We discovered our mistake ; the noise being occasioned by some men, who were robbing the garden, falling from a tree, and who were equally surprised with ourselves, supposing us placed there to watch their movements. Having been thus satisfied, we resumed our seats, finished our sketches, and proceeded to Tottenham, where we commenced sketching the church, I taking my station by the side of a table monument, and Varley close to me. To give my friends some idea of our feelings at this time as young artists, it will be only necessary to state, that we saw the people going to public worship : in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening, they found us there. So exact were our notions, that in colouring my sketch I copied the colours and even counted the bricks, minutely attending to every other particular. During the day we subsisted upon a crust of bread, and water, the latter of which we obtained from a neighbouring pump. On another occasion we drew and coloured, with much labour and fatigue, Stoke Newington Church. The colouring of my sketch,’ he adds with pardonable pride, ‘Varley has often referred to in later life as producing something very good.’

Neale often visited John Varley at his mother’s humble abode ; and once they got up a private play, hiring a room for the purpose at the corner of her court, in Old Street. Canvas, and a variety



of things necessary for the performance, were bought, and Varley and he set about painting the scenes. They had vast trouble, he tells us, to produce the proper effect where an oval looking-glass was represented between two windows. The pieces were 'George Barnwell' and 'Miss in her Teens ;' and the following was the cast :—

For <i>George Barnwell</i>		For <i>Miss in her Teens</i>	
<i>George B.</i>	J. P. Neale	<i>Billy Fribble</i>	J. P. Neale
<i>Freeman</i>	T. Bridges	<i>Major</i>	W. Ashton
<i>Uncle</i>	W. Ashton	<i>Miss in her Teens</i>	Miss Ashton
<i>Blunt</i>	J. Varley		
<i>Milwood</i>	Miss Ashton		
<i>Lucy</i>	Miss Varley		

The performances, as usual, went off with great applause ; but the subscriptions fell short of expectation and also of expenses. Neale had to endure much dunning from the landlady for her two guineas charged for the room ; and the theatre was broken up.

About this time John Varley was attacked, in 'Old Broad Street Road,' and tossed, by a bull, and much hurt. When, in after life, he turned, as is well known, so much of his attention to astrology, he declared that this was one of the casualties to which he had been specially liable from his nativity. It is to be presumed that the constellation Taurus had something to do with it.

His teacher, Barrow, must have thought well of Varley's talent, for he took him to Peterborough on a sketching expedition. The result was that the pupil made so excellent a view of the cathedral, that the master was lost sight of, and young Varley, on the strength of it, regarded as the artist who was sure to succeed. The 'View of Peterborough Cathedral' which thus brought him into notice was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798. It was a finished pencil-drawing made by him after his return, from sketches on the spot.

He now began to make acquaintances among successful members of his profession, and patrons of art, and rapidly advanced in his practice as a landscape draftsman. In 1798 or 1799 he travelled in North Wales with George Arnald (afterwards A.R.A.), a landscape painter of merit ; and, either at the same time or separately, with the drawing-master Baynes, whose cleverness in embellishing his pupil's works we have already been made acquainted with. His first tour in Wales, a pedestrian one, was the foundation of his fame. He

then first beheld the class of subjects that had the greatest attraction for him, and to the end of his life chiefly inspired the landscape compositions for which he became celebrated.

It was at this time that his talent attracted the admiration of Dr. Monro, who, in 1799 or 1800, took him to his country house at Fetcham to make coloured sketches in the neighbourhood, particularly about Box Hill. He was also one of the class of students that met at the Doctor's in Adelphi Terrace,<sup>1</sup> and, being three years or so younger than Girtin and Turner, must have come fully within the influence of their great example. For the advantage of being near this valued seat of art learning, John Varley, at Dr. Monro's suggestion, came, in the year 1800, that of Girtin's marriage, into that painter's old familiar neighbourhood, and took up his abode with his brother Cornelius, in Charles Street, Covent Garden.<sup>2</sup> Cornelius had been living with his uncle Samuel, the instrument maker. But when he joined his brother, he commenced the study of art under his guidance. Here the good Doctor visited John Varley, was delighted with his progress, in which he took great interest, standing by while he drew, and dictating the tints he should use. Girtin's patrons, the Earl of Essex and 'Prince' Lascelles, also patronized Varley, and visited him in his new studio.

The Messrs. Redgrave say<sup>3</sup> that he made another visit to Wales in this year, 1800. He had followed up the success of his first drawing at Somerset House by exhibiting four works there in 1799, and from that time till 1804, when he became a member of the 'old' (then new) Society, he had from three to six on the walls yearly. They were mostly views in Wales. That of Cader Idris, at the South Kensington Museum, in the early tinted manner, is very likely one which hung in the 'Anti-Room' in 1801. A few topographic plates of these early dates bear the name of J. Varley, as: 'Valle Crucis Abbey' (1800), 'Stilton' (1 Dec., 1800), 'Monmouth' (1801), all engraved by J. Walker; and 'Chepstow' (1801), in *Beauties of England and Wales*, xi. 175. He also began to take pupils. In 1801 Mrs. Schutz, to whose daughters he had given lessons, invited the two Varleys to her house at Gillingham in Norfolk. Cornelius remained

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Century*, i. 493.

<sup>2</sup> This is stated on the written authority of Cornelius Varley himself. But John Varley's address in the Royal Academy Catalogue of 1800 is 33 Craven Street, Hoxton, and in those from 1801 to 1804 is 2 Harris Place, Pantheon, Oxford Street. That in 1799 is 12 Furnival's Inn Court; that is to say, at Barrow's.

<sup>3</sup> *Ubi supra*.

there, and in the same year made sketches in Suffolk, of churches and gentlemen's residences.<sup>1</sup> John went also to the Earl of Essex's at Hampton Court, Hertfordshire. About this time he made the acquaintance of Wilson Lowry, the mechanical engraver, a man of varied scientific attainments, whose daughter afterwards became the painter's second wife.

In 1802 he visited North Wales again, in company with Cornelius, and with Thomas Webster, the architect of the lecture-room at the Royal Institution.<sup>2</sup> There they fell in with several brother artists, Joshua Cristall and young William Havell among the number, both to become distinguished members of the Water-Colour Society. At Dolgelly, where they met the latter, they also encountered a large party, comprising Mr. and Mrs. Lowry, Arthur Aikin and his sister Lucy the historian, Mr. Knight, and Mr. Donovan, who were making a geological tour through North Wales. In the next year, 1803, Cornelius Varley also began to exhibit drawings at Somerset House; and he went off to Wales again with Cristall, and made many drawings there. They met Havell at Ross, and the three pursued their journey together. While sketching in the market-place Varley excited Havell's envy by using a sheet of ass's skin for a palette. The latter, being burdened with the weight of an earthen palette, was charmed with the lightness of his friend's contrivance. Varley thereupon pulled out another sheet and gave it to him. This so delighted Havell that he stuck his earthen palette up in the market-place and pelted it with stones until he had broken it to pieces, much to the amusement of a crowd of spectators.<sup>3</sup> John Varley never made a sketching tour with Havell. He went that year into Yorkshire and Northumberland, and is said to have gone also about this time to Devonshire and to other parts of England.<sup>4</sup>

In the same year, 1803, he married his first wife, whose maiden name was Gisborne. One of her sisters became the wife of Copley Fielding, and another of Muzio Clementi, of musical celebrity.

Such were the antecedents of John and Cornelius Varley prior to their joining in the movement of the water-colour painters for a

<sup>1</sup> Some of the sketches of this year were sold by Christie, 15 July, 1875, among his remaining works after his death.

<sup>2</sup> Among the drawings sold after C. Varley's death was a 'Design made for the Royal Institution.' (Lot 146.)

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. MS. *ex relatione* C. Varley.

<sup>4</sup> *Art Union*, January 1843.



gallery of their own. The address of John Varley given in the first of the Society's catalogues is 15 Broad Street, Golden Square, and that of Cornelius Varley, 6 Hanover Street, Hanover Square.

Two of the six recruits remain to be accounted for. They were *J. C. Nattes* and *W. S. Gilpin*.

JOHN CLAUDE NATTES was a topographic draftsman, who worked in the tinted manner, had exhibited at the Royal Academy since 1782, and was engaged in the production of the following series of works, for which he travelled and made sketches: *Versailles, Paris, et St.-Denis*, folio, forty coloured aquatints chiefly by J. Hill, dated 1804 to 1809; *Hibernia Depicta*, 1802; *Scotia Depicta*, obl. 4to, fifty etchings by Jas. Fittler, A.R.A., dated 1801 to 1804; *Select Views of Bath, Bristol, Malvern, Cheltenham, and Weymouth*, 1805; *Bath and its Environs Illustrated*, folio, thirty coloured aquatints by J. Hill, dated 1804, 1805. In the *Beauties of England and Wales* there are 'Durham Cathedral' (frontispiece) and 'View in Newcastle,' drawn by J. R. Thompson and J. C. Smith after sketches by J. C. Nattes.

He is said by Redgrave to have been born in England about 1765, and to have been pupil of an Irish landscape-painter of no great character called Hugh Primrose Neale, who spent much of his time in Italy, enjoyed the *sobriquet* of the 'Irish Claude,'<sup>1</sup> as well as the patronage of Lord Palmerston (until he lost the latter by misconduct), and after turning Methodist preacher, died about 1784. Nattes's address was No. 5 Woodstock Street, Bond Street.

It was more by his connexion with art than by his ability as a draftsman that WILLIAM SAWRY GILPIN came to be welcomed as an adherent to the cause. Up to this time we find only one exhibited work of his, namely a 'Park Scene' at the Royal Academy in 1800. But he was in great practice as a drawing-master, for which, according to Nicholson, he was not a little indebted to his name and family influence, through which he had formed an extensive connexion.

He was descended from Bernard Gilpin, the divine. His father was Sawrey<sup>2</sup> Gilpin, an animal painter of much repute in his day,

<sup>1</sup> Whether the son's baptismal name was hence derived is matter for conjecture.

<sup>2</sup> In Watts's *Views* there is one of 'Broughton Tower, Lancashire, the seat of John Gilpin Sawrey, Esq.'

who came from Carlisle, had been patronized by the Duke of Cumberland in the old days of the Sandbys, had been president of the Incorporated Society, and in 1797 been made a full member of the Royal Academy, where he had exhibited since 1786. The son, William Sawrey Gilpin, was born in 1762.

More closely associated with the branch of art professed by the son is the name of his uncle, the Rev. William Gilpin, Vicar of Boldre in the New Forest, an amateur artist well known for his many writings on the theory and characteristics of landscape and picturesque beauty, generally illustrated with slight aquatinted sketches by his own hand, some, however, being by his brother the R.A. His original sketches were sold by him at Christie's in 1802 for the endowment of his parish school, and fetched 1,560*l*. William Gilpin's writings,<sup>1</sup> judging by their sale, were popular in his day, and no doubt contributed to the more generalized study of the picturesque, which at the end of the last century was rapidly superseding the taste for dry topography, and was in a great measure due to the awakened interest of amateurs like Gilpin in landscape art. In 1804, before the younger Gilpin, in whose Christian name his father's and uncle's were united, joined our embryo Society, William Gilpin in his eightieth year had joined the great majority, and Sawrey Gilpin had just attained the age of seventy.

<sup>1</sup> The following is believed to be a nearly complete list of William Gilpin's works : *Tour down the Wye*, 1782 (another edition, 1789). *Northern Tour*, 2 vols., 1788. *Scottish Tour*, 2 vols., 1789 (another edition, 1792). *Forest Scenery*, 2 vols., 1791 (other editions, 1794 and 1879). *An Essay on Prints, with Accounts of Engravers*, 8vo, 1792. *Essay on Picturesque Beauty*, 1794. *Western Tour*, 1798. (Sale Catalogue of Drawings, 1802.) The following were published after his death : *Southern Tour*, 1804. *Essay on Sketching*, 1804. *Eastern Tour*, 1809. *Practical Illustration of the Day*, representing various effects of Landscape Scenery, from Morning till Night, 30 plates, coloured like the original drawings, roy. 4to, 1811.

## CHAPTER V

## THE SOCIETY FOUNDED—BARRET AND CRISTALL

Meeting at Stratford Coffee-house—The Society as first founded—Gilpin first president—Six more members—*George Barret*—Birth and parentage—Early works—Exhibits at the Royal Academy—Morning and evening effects—Frugal industry—*Joshua Cristall*—Classic taste—Birth, parentage, and early life—At Rotherhithe—Taste for poetry fostered by mother—At Blackheath—Pollard of Morden and his Virgil—Father's opposition—At Mr. Ewson's—Refuses china trade—At Turner's factory, Brosely—Mary Wollstonecraft—Father ruined—Tries china-painting—Hard life—Finds a home at Mr. Clayton's—Print-works at Old Ford—Short rations—Lives with sister—Tries engraving—Student at the Royal Academy—Walk to Rome proposed—Practises water-colours—At Dr. Monro's—Early works—Paints on a panorama—George Dyer—Sketching tours—Adventure with Welsh miners—Exhibits at the Royal Academy—Addresses.

THESE ten water-colour painters, Wells, Shelley, Hills, and Pyne (the four original conspirators), with Pocock, Nicholson, the two Varleys, Nattes, and Gilpin, met together at the Stratford Coffee-house in Oxford Street, on the 30th of November, 1804, and there and then united themselves into an associated body, drew up a set of rules, and formally assumed the title of THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS<sup>1</sup> IN WATER-COLOURS. It was to consist of 'no more than twenty-four members.' They must be of 'moral character'<sup>2</sup> and 'professional reputation,' and 'resident in the United Kingdom.' For the direction of its affairs a president and other officers were to be elected annually; and there was to be a committee, with the secretary as an *ex-officio* member, the remaining seats being filled by all the members of the Society in succession. Out of the profits of the exhibition, should there be any after payment of expenses, a sum was to be set apart for expenses of the following year, and the residue divided among the members *in sums proportioned to the drawings sent*

<sup>1</sup> It had been a question among the founders, says Pyne (*Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 45), 'whether the novel term *painters* in water-colours might not be considered by the world of taste to savour of assumption.'

<sup>2</sup> In the Royal Academy the instrument of institution also required its members to be 'men of fair moral character' as well as artists of distinction. (Sandby's *Hist. R.A.*, i. 281-2; and see ii. 36.)



and retained for exhibition. It is important to bear in mind this last provision.

They then proceeded to elect officers for the ensuing year. Gilpin's position and connexions seemed to confer upon him a special qualification for that of president, and he was accordingly installed in the chair. Shelley was made treasurer, and Hills secretary. The first committee-men were Nicholson, Pocock, Pyne, and Wells; and Nattes and the two Varleys remained to represent the body of the Society. It was not, however, long, when the Society had thus assumed a definite shape, before the number of ordinary members was augmented by the addition of the following six, most of whom were artists of great merit and distinction. They were *George Barret*, *Joshua Cristall*, *John Glover*, *William Havell*, *James Holworthy*, and *Stephen Francis Rigaud*. The above-named sixteen members constituted the Society at the date of its first exhibition in 1805.

Before assigning to them their due rank therein, what is known of the respective antecedents and previous standing in the profession of the last-mentioned six artists must first be related.

Something has already been told of the early surroundings of GEORGE BARRET; how his father was one of the founders of the Royal Academy, as he himself was one of the first members of the Water-Colour Society; and how, being a landscape painter himself, with a strong feeling for English rural scenery, he was qualified to transmit to his son a valuable inheritance of art-training. It was all the wealth he could leave him. Imprudent in money matters, he became insolvent, and died in 1784, leaving a widow<sup>1</sup> and a large family wholly unprovided for. George was born in 1767 (or the beginning of the year after) in Orchard Street, Oxford Street, where his father then resided. About ten years before the elder Barret's death, the family removed to Westbourne Green, Paddington,<sup>2</sup> then quite a rural place, to get purer air, as the father suffered from asthma.

George Barret was about seventeen when he and his brothers and sisters were left orphans, and had to support themselves by their own exertions. Two of them, besides himself, took to the practice of

<sup>1</sup> A pension of 30*l.* a year was awarded by the Royal Academy to Barret's widow in 1802. (Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy*, i. 262.)

<sup>2</sup> In an appeal on behalf of the younger Barret's family, issued after his death, as an advertisement in the *Art Union* for June 1842, there occurs a statement that his early days were passed at the Manor House, Paddington, 'the residence of Barret's father in his prosperity.' See, *infra*, a reference to this house in connection with the life of Cristall.

art. James Barret exhibited landscapes in water and body colours, occasionally at Somerset House, between 1785 and 1800. And Miss M. Barret became a miniature painter, exhibited there in 1797–1799, and, a quarter of a century after, joined the Water-Colour Society. But George was by far the most distinguished for artistic talent.

Little seems to be known of his professional progress in these early years. He must have had, as he had more or less through life, a hard task to support himself by his pencil, before the appearance of his first exhibited work, which seems to have been in 1800,<sup>1</sup> when he was already about thirty-two years of age. In that year he had at the Academy 'A Rocky Scene' and 'Morning.'

To the class of subjects indicated in the latter title he was always partial. He used to say that he gained more by studying in the early morning and the evening than at any other time. His habit was to go to the same spot and watch the sunrise, morning after morning, making slight memoranda. He used to wait until the effect appeared that suited him, and go to the same sketch over and over again at the same hour on different days, working only as long as the particular effect lasted, under which he had commenced his study.<sup>2</sup> This mode of practice he continued through life, and the titles of his works show how long and how fondly he adhered to his favourite aspect of nature. Pyne, when mentioning, in 1824, a drawing in his possession of a 'Wood Scene,' by Barret, executed about 1799, writes as follows: 'We have watched the progress of this artist, we may almost say step by step, from the period when he commenced his career. Mr. Barret began early to study from nature, and to copy trees, banks, weeds, &c., with careful identity. His early coloured drawings were simple in effect, and chaste in colouring.'<sup>3</sup>

Unlike his father, the younger George Barret appears to have been a man of simple tastes, and frugal in his habits, while he was also industrious and devoted to his art. But he made so modest an estimate of the value of his own work, that he was always poor.

In 1801 and 1802 Barret again had one or two works at Somerset

<sup>1</sup> Graves's list and Redgrave's *Dictionary*. The following pictures, of earlier date, are, however, attributed to him in the *Century of Painters*, i. 489, exhibited in 1795: 'Gentleman's Seat in Yorkshire'; 'Scene on Loch Lomond';—in 1796: 'Lord Grantley's Seat (horses by Sawrey Gilpin)'; 'Scene in the Highlands (with portraits by Reinagle and horses by Gilpin).' The subjects would have pointed rather to the authorship of Barret, R.A., had he not been dead more than ten years.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. *ex relatione* Dorrell.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 47.

House; but otherwise his name does not appear in exhibition catalogues until the Water-Colour Society opened its gallery.

JOSHUA CRISTALL was another artist of refined quality who joined the Society at its commencement. Barret and he were nearly of an age; and he, like Barret, was little known to the public by exhibited works. One drawing only had he had at Somerset House, a portrait, hung in the Library in 1803, and not likely to have attracted much attention.<sup>1</sup> But, like Barret too, he possessed that high sense of ideal beauty to which has been given, perhaps too exclusively, the name of *classic* taste.<sup>2</sup> And, like him, he combined a gentle simplicity of character with an earnest love of his art.

Cristall was essentially a figure painter, though he excelled too in the combination of figures with landscape. In this, and in his choice of poetic subjects, as well as in his style of treating those of a more familiar kind, he was somewhat of an anomaly in the water-colour school. 'There was perceptible in his early designs,' says Pyne, 'a largeness of parts, and a greatness of execution, that called for more powerful space for the display of such rare excellences than the limited scope of water-colours could afford; unless, indeed, he had been sufficiently adventurous to have revived the art of body-colours, and attempted designs on the magnificent scale of the celebrated cartoons. We never recur,' observes the same writer, 'to the works of this classic genius, but we regret that he did not originally direct his fine talents for composition to the profession of sculpture, or to painting in oil.'<sup>3</sup> But the circumstances of poor Cristall's life were such as to leave him a very narrow choice as to his branch of the profession. He had to struggle, not only with want of means and connexion, but against the opposition of parents and friends; and the years which should have been devoted to his training in art were expended in the endeavour to obtain the education he needed. Being thus deprived of the advantage of early instruction and practice, he was constrained to acquire the mechanical parts of his art, at a time of life when he ought to have been engaged in applying them. Never, to the end of his days, did he feel the confidence due to a complete technical mastery of his craft.

<sup>1</sup> No. 746. Portrait of Mr. G. Adams.

<sup>2</sup> Since justness of proportion, in relations of form and quantity, is the leading aim of the so-called 'classic' style, the mathematician might, one would think, put in as fair a claim as the scholar's to a share in the nomenclature.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 195.



Cristall was a son of a Scotch sea-captain, 'Joseph Alexander Cristall, an Arbroath man,'<sup>1</sup> who before the artist's birth had hailed from Cornwall. There he married a widow of Penzance, who in course of time, and in addition to one 'incumbrance' by her former husband,<sup>2</sup> presented him with three sons and two daughters, not too amply provided for. Joshua is said to have been born in 1767,<sup>3</sup> either at Camborne in Cornwall, or, according to another account, in the heart of London city, not far from the shadow of Aldgate Pump. Be that as it may, his parents lived at Rotherhithe<sup>4</sup> during part at least of his early boyhood. The father, much at sea, trading principally to Turkey, though he had at one time and another been all over the world, left the children's education chiefly in their mother's hands. It was well that he did so, for she paid the school fees out of a small separate income of her own, which appears to have been a bone of contention between husband and wife. The father was of an extremely jealous disposition, and his time ashore was usually a period of trouble and discomfort in the family. Besides this, the mother was a capable person, of a nature befitting her Cornish descent—strong, quick, active, and persevering, and, moreover, a woman of education and taste. Some of the above qualities were transmitted to two at least of her children—the boy Joshua and the elder girl.<sup>5</sup> Both were remarkable for natural talent, quick perception, and great perseverance, as well as for good taste and refinement of feeling. Cristall in after life seldom spoke of his father, but described his mother as a 'strong-minded woman.' And he was particularly attached to his elder sister. They studied together as children, and hand in hand did they daily walk to London and back for their schooling when the family lived at Rotherhithe.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. MSS. *ex relatione* Miss E. Cristall. Messrs. Redgrave (*Century of Painters*, i. 508) say that she was a daughter of Mr. John Batten, a merchant of Penzance; and Mr. W. H. Tregellas (*Dict. Nat. Biog.*) states that her name was Ann Batten Cristall, and that she was born in 1745; but neither mentions a previous marriage.

<sup>3</sup> Biographers concur in giving this date. But Cristall himself, in a letter in August 1839, writes that he has then 'commenced his 71st year,' which would seem to place his birth in 1769.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Tregellas (*ubi supra*) believes that, besides being owner of a trading vessel, J. A. Cristall was, 'a shipbreaker, having yards at Rotherhithe, Penzance, and Fowey.' In the *New Annual Directory* 1800, and the *Post Office Directory* 1806, we find the name and address 'Alexander Cristall, Sail, Mast, & Block-maker, 297 Rotherhithe.'

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Tregellas (*ubi supra*) tells us that she wrote some *Poetical Sketches*, published in 1795, and that both she and her sister were engaged in tuition.

The artist showed his natural bent in very early days, even when he was still 'in petticoats. He used his mother's scissors to cut out the objects around him in paper, which induced her to furnish him with a pencil, and he used it to aid his amusements. When he was taken to the theatre he remembered the scenes and copied them, to act them over again; and thus on all occasions, for pleasure, the pencil was resorted to.'<sup>1</sup> His scanty pocket money went to purchase Spanish liquorice, which he employed as a water-colour to adorn the whitewash of his bedroom walls with spirited designs.<sup>2</sup> An early fondness for music accompanied this love of drawing. In another way, too, his mother was able to aid in the cultivation of his taste. Endowed with a wonderfully retentive memory, she used when he was a little boy to recite to him passages from the poets, Shakspeare being her particular delight. Joshua was always her favourite child; and great was her disappointment when his godfather, from whom she had expected help on his commencing life, died rich, but left him nothing.

While Cristall was still a boy his parents removed to Blackheath, where they lived for twenty-one years. But it was only during a small portion of that term that he remained a member of the domestic circle. He was sent for a short time to a school at Greenwich. Meanwhile he had another opportunity of improving his mind. There was then, as there is now, on the south side of the heath, a quiet old brick building of a substantial kind, with pleasant grounds about it, where 'decayed Turkey merchants' rested after their labours, and passed the evenings of their lives in comfort and tranquillity. It was called Morden College, after its founder, Sir John Morden, who gave its first benefaction in memory of a fortune made at Aleppo. It was probably through Captain Cristall's connexion with the trade to the Levant that his son came to make the acquaintance of a pensioner there, who took a great fancy to the lad. His name was Pollard. He had a folio copy of Dryden's translation of Virgil, from which he would read aloud to his young friend, and thus helped to develop the poetic sentiment already aroused in him by his mother's recitals. Finally, he made him a present of the precious volume, which Cristall treasured through life. Mr. Jenkins makes a memorandum that on the 20th of May, 1851, Miss Elizabeth Cristall showed him the book with its quaint

<sup>1</sup> Miss E. Cristall.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 508.

old plates, and the names 'William Pollard' and 'Joshua Cristall' inscribed within. She had then survived her brother, and was an old lady turned eighty, but could read it, as well as work, without glasses.

These days of springtide hope were all too short. When the time came to launch the young man into the world, there arose the old familiar contest between a son's natural longing and a parent's unsympathetic will. Cristall's father, like Nicholson's and Varley's, had a dread of the arts, and looked upon the profession of a painter as a sure road to penury. Bred himself to mercantile pursuits, he was wholly for trade. So Joshua was placed with a Mr. Ewson, of Aldgate, who did a good business in china and glass. But the mind of young Cristall ran upon higher art than tea-cups and tumblers. It happened that the way in which he exercised his pencil became a means of introduction to the favour of his employers. Mrs. Ewson, having no children, had set her affections upon a dog, a rough water-spaniel. This pet of his mistress's served Cristall for a model. He made an excellent drawing of it, which so struck Mr. Ewson's fancy that he had it framed and hung up during his wife's absence as a surprise to her on her return home. The result was highly successful. Not only was Mrs. Ewson delighted with the portrait, but the draftsman became a prime favourite with the worthy couple. So much so, indeed, that, had Cristall been of his father's way of thinking, his fortune would from that time have been as good as made. For the Ewsons' was a lucrative concern, and, both of them dying soon after, it was offered gratuitously to the young artist.

But Cristall could not make up his mind to abandon thus all hope of becoming a painter, and refused the offer. Not that he had any visible prospect of attaining his desire. He had no means at his disposal, and was again obliged to accept temporary employment in the service of trade. It was possibly through connexions made in the Aldgate business that he obtained a situation at Turner's celebrated china factory, near Broseley in Shropshire. How he comported himself there, and what were his wishes and intentions at this time, may in some measure be inferred from the following extracts from two letters of serious and judicious advice, written to him by the celebrated Mary Wollstonecraft; who appears from their internal evidence to have been a kind and considerate friend, both to him and to his sister. These letters are believed to have been written both in



one year. The date 1793, or thereabouts, has been assigned to them, but it seems more likely that it was three or four years earlier.

*'To Mr. Cristall, at Mr. Turner's China Manufactory, near Brosely, Salop.*

*'London: March 19th.*

'... I think you ingenious, yet I am afraid that you are too sanguine in your expectations of succeeding as an artist. Besides abilities, a happy concurrence of circumstances is necessary to enable a painter to earn a livelihood; and many years of anxiety and painful industry must be passed, before a man of superior talents can look with any certainty for to-morrow's subsistence. You admire Mr. Home's picture; yet he was obliged to leave the kingdom because he could not get employment.<sup>1</sup> And Mr. F.,<sup>2</sup> with his original genius and uncommon diligence, had a very precarious support till the Shakespear plan commenced. In short, I could mention many other circumstances; but it appears unnecessary, for you will not put yourself on a par with Mr. Home, I am sure. However, my arguments are not brought forward to discourage you from following in some degree your bent. I only wish to caution you against the headstrong ardour of youth. Pursue your studies. Practise as much as you can; but do not think of depending on painting for a subsistence before you know the first rudiments of the art. I know that you wish to be the friend and protector of your amiable sister, and hope no inconsiderate act or thoughtless mode of conduct will add to her cares, for her comfort very much depends on you. I find Mr. Turner intends to send you to travel for him very soon. This will in every respect be a great advantage to you. You will see the country, form connections, and have more leisure to improve. Pray let me hear from you soon and tell me what you intend to do, and I will candidly give you my opinion; and, as I have had more experience than you, it may be useful to you. I now write in a hurry because the post is going, but I wish I could forcibly represent to you the necessity of following your inclinations with caution. A

<sup>1</sup> Robert Home was a brother of Sir Everard Home, the anatomist, and a pupil of Angelica Kauffman's. After painting portraits in Dublin and exhibiting his works there and in London, he went to India, was appointed court-painter to the King of Oude, and then made a fortune by his profession. He chiefly depicted military subjects and state ceremonies. (*Redgrave's Dictionary.*)

<sup>2</sup> Fuseli, R.A. He painted eight or nine subjects for Boydell's Shakspeare Gallery.

man's character is of the greatest importance in any line ; and if you determine to leave Mr. Turner when your time expires, I hope you will be careful not to quarrel with him. . . . How do you come on with your Music and Drawing? You scarcely know what industry is required to arrive at a degree of perfection in the Fine Arts, and how dreadful it is to plunge into the world without friends or acknowledged abilities. I have lately made some inquiries, and I think that it would be next to madness for you to launch out before you made any preparatory steps. London is not now paved with gold, and a false step in the beginning of life frequently throws a gloomy cloud over the fairest hopes. If you determine to become a painter, declare your intention to your master, father, and friends in a manly manner ; when you have courage to do so, and act with firmness instead of rashness, I shall begin to think that you have some chance to succeed. A weak man may be rash, but only a strong understanding can enable a youth to act with firmness. Should I perceive such strength of mind in you, I shall suppose that you follow the impulse of nature, and are not led away by unprincipled wishes, wild desires which make you selfishly forget your sister's peace of mind and your own future advantage. Virtue is self-denial. If you cannot bear some present inconvenience, you are a common man and will never rise to any degree of eminence in anything you undertake. I am yours,

‘ M. W.’

The second letter is in a like strain.

‘ *To Mr. Cristall, Caughley, near Brosely, Salop.*

‘ London : December 9th.

‘ Your sister has, I hope, long since informed you that my silence was not an intentional slight, but the natural consequence of various circumstances. My time is fully employed, and when I cannot attend to the pursuits which on every account occupy my mind, I am not in a humour to write. I want air and exercise. Indeed I am grown a wretched correspondent, when neither duty nor business impels me. I am sorry to hear that you are yet unsettled, halting between two opinions. You ought resolutely to determine on the part you mean to act in life, and adhere to your determination. If you waver much longer, you will spend your most vigorous days in childish wishes, and, instead of being useful to your sisters, become a burden to yourself. Determine like a man whether Drawing is to

be the business or amusement of your future life ; and banish vain regrets if you ever intend to make a respectable figure in the world. With respect to music, I would by all means have you cultivate your taste. When nature gives a propensity, it ought not to be neglected ; and every accomplishment you acquire will render you a more agreeable companion, and furnish you with an innocent source of pleasure when you are alone. And every innocent relaxation is a support to virtue ; for I respect the good old proverb that Idleness is the mother of Vice, and I am persuaded that our greatest comforts must arise from employment. But I need not tell you so, for you are always active and eager to improve yourself and make a proper use of your time. . . . I have seldom seen your sister since you left town. I fear her situation is still very uncomfortable. I wish she could obtain a little more strength of mind. I am afraid she gives way to her feelings more than she ought to do. If I were to give a short definition of virtue, I should call it fortitude. Adieu. Believe me your friend,  
‘MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT.’

The omitted passages refer to a brother of the writer's, whom she describes as an idle, dissipated young man, warning Cristall against him as a dangerous associate and bad example.

The appointment as traveller to Turner's firm, referred to in one of the above letters, had been obtained by Cristall at his own solicitation. But the life does not seem to have been very congenial to him. He was not of a nature to push his way by making connexions, as his good friend had anticipated. While travelling through England and Wales, his thoughts ran more on the picturesque than on a mercantile position. Part of his time was spent in sketching the old ruins and abbeys that he met with in his journeys ; too much it is to be feared, for, somehow, his engagement came to an end before the expiration of the term agreed upon. Either he abandoned it himself, or his employers, finding that he paid more attention to his pencil than to their books, superseded him. After this second break-down of the young man's prospects in trade, his return caused such dissatisfaction in the family that he was induced to keep from their knowledge the troubles he afterwards encountered.

It may have been about this time (but the dates are very conjectural) that any further pecuniary help which he might have derived from his father was rendered impossible by a blow which fell upon the



family. Mr. Cristall became paralytic, and was ruined by the fault or mismanagement of dependants, in some business which he had conducted, he not having at the time a son old enough to supply his place. Young Cristall's life was now a hard one, trials and disappointments succeeding one another apace. Having to earn his daily bread, he first obtained, through a friend, a situation as a copying clerk. But to his active mind the drudgery was an irksome task. He longed to be at his pencil, or enjoying the beauties of nature, in freedom. Detesting his employment, and dozing over his desk, he was unable to get through the amount of writing required of him. His master complained, and on coming in one day found him asleep on his stool. On receiving the sharp reproof that might have been expected, poor Joshua answered plainly that the work was too dull for him, and that he could only be active in what he loved. This of course ended in his dismissal.

He was at large again, and would study glorious nature. But again, and again, he had to live. The friend who had assisted him before, and to whom he now once more applied for advice, blamed him for his conduct, and then suggested that he should try an employment having in it some relation to, or spice of the fine arts. 'You can draw,' said he, 'and have had means of observation while at the Potteries. I think you might try that branch. I will give you a set of china' (jars apparently), 'for you to do your best with, and if I like your work I will put you forward.' Cristall's ambition was still for a higher style of art, but to refuse the work would be to lose an important friend. He accepted the task, trial as it was to him. Some instruction, however, was necessary, even to accomplish this. So, seeking for one who might teach him the technical matters needful to its completion, he found a man who, for a sum of money (it was all the pupil had), allowed him not only to work daily with his own artificers, but to continue work after the others had gone. Then he found courage to confess that he had given his last shilling, and was also without a home. After that, he was permitted to stay all night in the workshop, where he slept on stools before the stove, covered by the men's working coats. How he kept himself from starving, it is hard to say. Perhaps his mother helped him clandestinely, as it is said she long continued to do. He did not allow the workmen to know of his dependent situation. Rising with the sun, he would walk to Hampstead or to Kentish Town, then full of lovely country scenery,

would wash in some stream, breakfast on a dry loaf and water, and cheer his spirit with a pure draught from nature's loveliness ; returning to his work at the time when the men came to theirs, as if he, like them, had a home which he had just left. One morning, on his return, he found, to his utter dismay, that the master who had so far befriended him had decamped, taking everything away with him, except the china which Cristall was painting. The man was deeply in debt to his workmen as well as to the tradespeople who had employed him.

Bitter indeed was poor Cristall's anguish at the event, and the terribly false position in which it placed him. But things at their worst are apt to mend ; and a promise of better times arose even out of these evil circumstances. Among the persons who had given work to the runaway painter of crockery, and had suffered by his default, was a Mr. Lacklan ; who, on coming to look after his own interests, found our hero sitting, bewildered and disconsolate, in the denuded workshop. Going up to him, Mr. Lacklan proceeded to inquire of him the particulars of the man's departure. Whereupon Cristall told him of his own melancholy condition. The hearer had pity on him in his forlorn state, and took him to the home where he resided with his wife's parents. In the house of these truly charitable persons, whose name was Clayton, the poor young man was received with Christian sympathy and kindness, for which he never after ceased to express a heartfelt gratitude.

Mr. Lacklan contrived that he should go on with his work, alone with him and under his observation ; and, when the painting was finished, got some one in the trade to fire the pieces. Cristall at length placed them in the hands of the friend who had entrusted them to him ; but, after recounting the difficulties he had met with in accomplishing the task, declined to try his skill upon any more.<sup>1</sup> He had now a home at Mr. Clayton's,<sup>2</sup> and could take more time to look about him. But he did not, even yet, see an opening through which to enter the profession of which he longed to be a member.

<sup>1</sup> Whether these were the first or only china enamels executed by him is perhaps doubtful. 'When' (on 11 Dec. 1851) 'I called,' writes Mr. Jenkins, 'on Mr. Dorrell' (member of the Water-Colour Society, born 1778, died 1857) 'to glean some particulars of his old friend Cristall, he told me that Cristall, early in life, was engaged at the Potteries, and took from his mantleshef a small specimen of china, which he placed in my hands, stating that it was painted by Cristall.'

<sup>2</sup> Many of the particulars of this narrative are derived from notes furnished to Mr. Jenkins by Mrs. M'Ketchnie, a granddaughter of this Mr. Clayton's, to whom Joshua Cristall stood godfather.

Mr. Lacklan had originally been a print-designer, and it was probably through him that Cristall soon after this obtained a situation in a large printing establishment at Old Ford, where he remained for a considerable time. This house was admirably managed, and conducted with a benevolent regard for the well-being of the employés. The building they lived in was large, and commodiously adapted to the purpose of enabling many men to associate together after business hours. They had a great room, furnished, it would seem, with books, in which they met for reading and discussion, and where any favourite branch of study might be pursued. At the head of the establishment, either as master or foreman, was a well-informed Scotchman, by whom Cristall's studies were greatly aided, both in drawing and in reading. He would point out the best authors, and suggest a course calculated to improve the mind. On Sunday they were visited by a Unitarian minister, and on particular evenings they held theological discussions with him, on his own creed, the doctrines of Swedenborg, &c. Here our student, though lean enough to begin with, resolved to put his body, as well as his mind, through a course of training. He entered into an agreement with a Scotch comrade, to live, both of them, for twelve months, wholly on salt pork and rice. They procured between them a barrel of the one and a bag of the other, and stuck strictly to their engagement. At the end of the year, they had no wish to renew it, although, as Cristall often declared afterwards, they were never better in their lives. When he left Old Ford, it was with a final determination to enter life as an artist.

His father probably died at about this time; for Miss Cristall states that it was not until after that event that he entered on his favourite occupation. The Lacklans had now ceased to reside at Mr. Clayton's, and gone to live at 28 Surrey Street, Blackfriars Road. Cristall took up his abode there also, and, except during an occasional residence out of town, dwelt with them for the next twelve years. His sister Elizabeth came to live with him, and participated in the endeavours he made to obtain a foothold on the ladder of life. They were thrown upon the world without property; but he persisted in following his decided bent, and tried at every avenue to the profession of art. Not satisfied with enamelling, he took up engraving, and for a short time 'worked with Barlow' (probably J. Barlow, who executed plates in Ireland's 'Hogarth,' Rees's 'Encyclopædia,' &c.). But it would



not do. Then it was proposed between them that he should draw and Miss Cristall engrave. But this scheme was abandoned on the representation of Holloway, the leading engraver of the day, that a lady could not be regularly taught unless she lived with a father or relative who could instruct her.<sup>1</sup> She could not be taken as an apprentice, and no separate lessons could be given. Women had not then the facilities for education which they now enjoy. So this idea with the others had to be given up; and some years after Cristall had attained his majority, he became a student of the Royal Academy.<sup>2</sup>

He now began to breathe the air which his constitution demanded. The progress of development was rapid, albeit he could never overtake the lost moments of his many wasted years. He studied anatomy, and his taste for classic art was formed and strengthened by the models placed before him. He attended Barry's lectures, was fired by his enthusiasm, and wished to follow his example. The professor told the students that artists could live at Rome, as he had done, on fourpence a day. So thither Joshua Cristall and Miss Elizabeth resolved to trudge together hand in hand, even as he and his elder sister had gone to school in childhood from their old home at Rotherhithe. They could walk all the way, and improve their talents on the road. But war with France broke out, and this project, too, had to be set aside.

Cristall seems now to have turned his attention more seriously to the use of water-colours as affording sufficient means of expression of his artistic ideas. A folio of drawings by Raphael, which he had observed to be in good preservation, appear to have been some encouragement to him in his endeavours. He thought that water-colour sketches might be heightened and improved from the mere washes which they formerly were. 'At last,' adds Miss Cristall, after making the above statement, 'he succeeded and made pictures. But his best years were cruelly wasted. Want of proper instruction made him dissatisfied with what he did, and I used to grieve to see repeatedly beautiful scenes and ideas in figure and landscape painted over, or turned and used on the opposite side. More than has come out has been so wasted. His higher qualities have been sadly lost.

<sup>1</sup> Byrne and Lowry taught their daughters to engrave.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Cristall assigns the year 1795 or thereabouts to this event, but it seems by what follows to have been somewhat earlier.

. . . I could not but deplore that such decided and real genius should, through unfortunate prepossessions in his father, be almost cast away. . . . I cannot give dates, except that in 1795 we two were living together.'<sup>1</sup>

The time came at last when the artist was able, though barely, to shift for himself. It was so in an unfigurative sense, for his mother complained that she had had to buy his shirts for him when he was thirty. But he was, as above said, her favourite child, and out of her little annuity she still helped him occasionally with clothes at a time of life when men are generally making their best income.

The steps whereby Cristall came in course of time to be numbered as one of the little clique of water-colour painters of talent known to connoisseurs at the end of the century, it would be difficult to count exactly.<sup>2</sup> But one aid to improvement, at least, may be confidently set down to the influence of the good friend of all striving young artists of his class, Dr. Monro, at whose house he attended as one of the group of students so often mentioned in these pages.<sup>3</sup>

The late Dr. Percy in his MS. Catalogue, now at the British Museum, states that he saw in 1881, at Sir John St. Aubyn's, at Mount's Bay, Cornwall, some large drawings of that county signed 'J. Cristall,' with a date about 1790 or somewhat later, 'very carefully done and of a prevailing blue colour.'

One of the first professional efforts of his brush was in a share which he took in painting an early panorama, which circumstance caused him ever after to take a great interest in that branch of art. This one represented Constantinople; and it was painted in the great room at Spring Gardens, where Girtin's 'London' was afterwards exhibited. One of his coadjutors was a comrade of the name of Hayward, with whom he had made acquaintance at the works at Old

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Miss Cristall to Mrs. Clive, dated 'Lewisham Hill, April 8th, 1851.'

<sup>2</sup> The account given by Mrs. M'Ketchnie of Cristall's earlier life contains the following passage, which is here given for what it is worth, though it varies in some particulars from the history of the origin of the Water-Colour Society as above recounted: 'He was studying hard as a portrait painter, and his admirers considered he would have excelled Sir Thomas Lawrence had he continued at it; but one day when returning from sketching he met Varley, Girtin, and another whose name I forget. They told him they had been talking of forming a society for exhibiting water-colour drawings, and asked him to join them; he said with *all his heart*. Thus the Society was formed, and his portrait painting discarded, which sadly grieved his admirers.' If this be correct, it gives to Girtin (at least) a share not hitherto accredited to him in the origination of our Society, and, as he died in 1802, seems to assign to it a somewhat earlier date.

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

Ford, attracted probably by their common proclivity to art.<sup>1</sup> It was an intensely cold winter, during which Cristall endured much suffering ; one of the specially recorded frosts, possibly the same in which Thaddeus of Warsaw (or John Sell Cotman) came to London as aforementioned. The young painters used to say that they had great difficulty in getting through their work ; being in no small danger of falling from the very high scaffold erected for their purpose, and under the vigilant eye of a proprietor who was so diligent in overlooking them, that, although benumbed with cold, they were unable to come down and warm themselves.

Cristall also began to take pupils. His abilities and pleasing manners soon won him friends ; and he made some intimate acquaintances with leading men of talent. Among them, George Dyer, the poet and Greek scholar, became a constant visitor ; and he is said to have conceived a platonic affection for Miss Cristall. We have already found our artist sketching in North Wales when the Varleys met him there in 1802, and going there again with Cornelius Varley in 1803. He was enabled to make these tours and also one to the Lakes by an opportune bequest of a sum of money.<sup>2</sup>

It was in the course of the first of these rambles that an adventure occurred which placed the lives of Cristall and a companion<sup>3</sup> in some jeopardy. Two accounts of the affair, furnished to Mr. Jenkins by friends of Cristall (Dorrell and Mrs. M'Ketchnie), agree in the main particulars. It seems that the party had to put up for a few days at an inn in a mining district, where the people were much excited by the prospect of a French invasion. On returning one day from sketching, our artists found the largest room in the house filled with colliers, who, having taken them for spies making plans of the country, were prepared to deal with them after the fashion of Mr. Justice Lynch. Mutual ignorance of language prevented an explanation, and matters might have been very serious had it not been for the intervention of the stout landlord. As it was, the supposed offenders were hurried off to the nearest magistrate's. But here a fresh impediment occurred. His worship, 'it being midday,' was

<sup>1</sup> Presumably J. S. Hayward, mentioned by Redgrave as an amateur who painted well in water-colours and exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1805 to 1812 both figures and landscapes ; and probably the same Hayward who was Secretary of the Sketching Society.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Dorrell. There are small studies from Wales, dated 1803, in the collection of drawings by Cristall at the British Museum ; and from the Lakes, dated 1805, both there and at the Scottish National Gallery (Nos. 214, 249).

<sup>3</sup> Named as 'Webster the geologist.'



drunk, and falling downstairs in an attempt to answer the summons, remained for the time incapable. Fortunately, however, the reverend gentleman (he was the parson) had a better half, who became their preserver. She could speak a little English, and was able to grasp the situation. Using the influence she possessed, which was considerable, with the patriot mob, she induced them to wait till next day, the prisoners remaining in custody at the parsonage. Then, at midnight, having provided three horses, she rode by their side through by-ways, brambles and thickets, and placed them in safety ten miles away.

In 1803 Cristall exhibits at the Royal Academy ; and this brings us within twelve months of the time when, at the age of thirty-five, he was induced to join the Society of water-colour artists, which was in course of formation. His address in the Royal Academy Catalogue for 1803 is ' 137 High Holborn ; ' and that in the first of the Society's (for 1805) is ' 36 Berners Street and at Kentish Town.' Doubtless he resided in the last-named quarter.

## CHAPTER VI

## GLOVER, HAVELL, HOLWORTHY, AND RIGAUD

*John Glover*—Popular teacher and artist—Birth and parentage—Writing-master—Taste for agriculture—Love of animals—Power of taming birds—Taste for music—Early subjects—Settles at Lichfield—Marriage and family—Personal characteristics—Diligence and activity—Sketching in Wales and Dovedale—Boyish spirit—Works at the Royal Academy—*William Havell*—Birth and parentage—Artist family—Irrepressible bent—Sketches in Wales—Exhibits at the Royal Academy—Painter in local colour—*James Holworthy*—Birth and antecedents—Friend of Turner's—*S. F. Rigaud*—Figure-painter—Antecedents.

JOHN GLOVER, the next above-mentioned of the new adherents, was an artist of great popularity in his day. Born in the same year as Barret and Cristall, he, unlike them, was not only well established already in the profession, but enjoyed a wide appreciation of his talent as a landscape-painter. Although of an humbler origin than either, he had had fewer obstacles to contend with in the pursuit of his chosen career. Hitherto his success had been in a measure confined to the provinces; for, although he had exhibited at the Royal Academy since 1795, he resided at Lichfield, and there he was chiefly engaged in tuition, both 'public and private.'<sup>1</sup> He painted in oil, as well as in water-colours, but it is on his now faded works in the latter medium that his reputation chiefly rests. His practice, technically speaking, was little in advance of the old tinted method, but his style was not devoid of originality, and, in his own drawings, showed itself capable of producing very beautiful effects. It was, however, not free from a mannerism which recommended it to a tribe of pupils who, not being like himself students of nature, necessarily failed in its intended application.

Glover was a self-taught artist; and, although his practice in water-colours is said to have been founded on that of William Payne,<sup>2</sup> does not appear to have derived much development from contact with

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 July, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 515.

the greater artists of the rising school. His manner of painting was probably settled by the time that he joined the Water-Colour Society. A fuller analysis of his practice being reserved for another occasion, the present shall be devoted to an account of his antecedents and personal characteristics. Some of the following anecdotes refer, indeed, to a rather later period than that with which we are now dealing, but are inserted here to show the manner of man that he must have been from the time, at least, of his arrival at man's estate.

He was the youngest of three children, and born at Houghton-on-the-Hill, about six miles east of the town of Leicester, on the 18th of February, 1767. His father was a poor man, engaged in agriculture. But the bucolic cast of the parent's mind did not prevent him from giving his children a good plain and Christian education, or induce him to check his son John's bias towards art, exhibited in the child's habit of covering every scrap of paper he could find with infantine designs. Young Glover could handle the pen too with effect, as well as the pencil, and became so great a proficient in calligraphy, that when he grew to the age of nineteen he was engaged as writing master in the free school at Appleby. He had not, in the mean time, like some of his rivals in art already mentioned, been eating out his heart in a life distasteful to him, nor consuming his spirit in vain endeavours to follow a congenial pursuit, instead of the plough. He had a natural taste for agriculture, which he retained to the end of his days. The country was not to him, as to young Nicholson, a region of mental desolation. His love of rural scenery was accompanied by a remarkable fondness for animals. Cattle are among the favourite subjects of his early drawings, and at one time he took to painting animals as large as life. But his peculiar fancy was for birds. He had an extraordinary power of taming them, and delighted in making them his pets. These he held on such terms of attachment that he would allow them to fly away to their native woods, and they came back at his call whenever he pleased. Perhaps a good ear for music, to the practice of which sister art he was much addicted, may have had something to do with the fascination he commanded.

There can be no doubt, too, that while helping to till the midland acres he was diligent in studying the scenery of his own country district. In a book of slight sketches by Glover, brought from the antipodes, where it was purchased of him late in his life, Mr. Jenkins



found one of trees in Indian ink, under which the artist had written the following lines :—

Oh, Ingersby . . .  
How gladly I recall your well-known seats,  
Beloved of old, and that delightful time  
When all alone for many a summer's day  
I wandered through your calm recesses, led  
In silence by some powerful hand unseen.

To these lines he had added the following words of explanation : ' This was my early school. These were the scenes near my native place, which helped to make me a Landscape Painter.' One of the three drawings of his first year's appearance, in 1795, at Somerset House, was a ' View near Ingersby, Leicestershire.' Again, in the first exhibition, in 1824, of the Society of British Artists, of which Glover was one of the founders, there was a picture of his entitled, ' A favourite haunt of my youth in Leicestershire.' Pyne describes it as representing an enchanting site, with greenwood trees and a pellucid, brawling stream, observing that the artist ' whose original feeling for the pursuits of painting developed itself under the influence of his own perceptions alone, first studied in the vicinity of the spot.'<sup>1</sup> This was no doubt another reminiscence of Ingersby Hollow, a spot within two miles of Houghton.

Glover's professional practice began during his residence at Appleby. He found employment in what was to so many of our water-colour painters their first pathway to profit, the delineation of gentlemen's seats in the neighbourhood. And doubtless he also turned to good account the opportunities afforded by the lovely scenery of Westmoreland.

After some half-dozen years spent in this united devotion to the pen and pencil, he felt sufficient confidence in himself to set up as an artist and teacher of art, in a new locality. In 1794 he removed to the cathedral town of Lichfield, where, as above stated, he divided his time between a good business which he acquired there, as a drawing master, and his own practice in art ; sketching as much as he could in the neighbourhood, and indulging at the same time his taste for music. He now began to paint in oil ; and also etched some plates,<sup>2</sup> and we first find his name in the Academy Catalogue the year after he took up his residence in the Trent valley.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave says that he made many etchings. The British Museum has only one, of two cows, in soft ground.

He married at an early age, and was the father of six children, four sons and two daughters. In person, Glover was tall and stout. But he had club feet. In spite of his lameness, however, he was very active, and, enjoying excellent health, could walk many miles a day with ease. He followed his art with untiring diligence, was an early riser, and only took as much rest and recreation as appeared needful to keep him in health. A very little sufficed for that purpose. If report spoke truly, when he was about to open an exhibition of his works (hereinafter mentioned), he took no more than two hours' sleep in the twenty-four for a month together, except on Sundays. A pupil<sup>1</sup> relates that when they were painting together at a like time Glover would take off his spectacles, and, in a sitting posture, fall asleep in an instant, and in a few minutes would again be at work, perfectly refreshed, to pursue till a late hour in the evening the occupation he loved. The same informant, who worked and sketched with him much when at the height of his career, relates further that, during a six weeks' tour together in Wales, the master was always up before five and kept on at work every day till dark. The pupil, on his own confession, was less industrious. But *chacun à son goût*. 'We had each a tent,' says he. 'Mr. Glover gave me mine. His first picture in this trip was a view of Cader Idris from the hills above Mr. Owen's of Garthyngared. He painted; I was only looking on, and rambling about the hills with Mr. Owen's daughters.' Yet Glover could ramble too, if sufficiently tempted, in spite of his love of art, and his club feet. 'I remember,' says the same informant, 'on one of these days' (this was about the year 1820), 'that Mr. Glover left his tent to follow a young skylark, which he at length caught; and he tamed it so completely that he gave it its liberty every day, and it came to him for food, and every night it rested in a little covered basket. He afterwards tamed a white water-wagtail, a yellow wagtail, and a titmouse. They all slept in the same basket. The lark was alive several years afterwards. The wagtails came to an untimely end. The titmouse had fits after eating; and he gave it to a Miss Lloyd of Caernarvon. He would, for recreation merely, 'follow a bird and find its nest. I once saw him jump up from his picture to take a wasps' nest in the middle of the day. Never was there a boy more earnest in the sport, or more absorbed by it till it was ended.'

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edward Price, writing to Mr. Jenkins from Nottingham in 1856.

Though 'at all other times very diligent with his pencil, Mr. Glover was playful in his moments of recreation.' In illustration of this, his pupil gives the following account of 'a little bit of merry mischief he attempted in Dovedale, when he made two fine pictures there': 'I have heard my father, who was the incumbent of Christ Church, Needwood, say that he remembered the river Dove when it was far more beautiful than it is now,<sup>1</sup> or than it was when Mr. G. was there. It was in its natural state, when the bright stream met with the frequent interruption of fragments of rock, and other' obstacles 'of a most picturesque character. When Mr. Glover was painting there, but few of these things remained. For the present proprietor had caused artificial weirs to be made in several places across the river, to deepen the water for his trout and grayling. Mr. Glover did not like this. We took up our quarters at a little inn called the Dog and Partridge, about a mile from the entrance of the dale, and early in the morning, when we [went] with our tents, and late in the evening when we returned to our inn, we stopped to do all the mischief we could to these weirs. Mr. Glover sometimes contrived to throw a lump of rock cleverly upon the verge of the fall, which caused a little diversion of the water; but he intended to dislodge a stone of the weir, and leave the water to finish his work; and he would, with a stick, wriggle about among the heavy stones till he actually saw runlets of the river beginning to do his bidding. But he had no mercy upon me; for he sent me into the water to assist in the work of destruction. A quarter of a century has passed,' adds the writer, 'and the weirs appear just the same now as when we were trying to alter them.'

Of Glover's agility and daring, his companion relates the following example, the scene being in the same locality:—'There is a cavern in Dovedale, high up the hill on the right hand, and halfway up the dale, called *Reynard's Cave*. This cavern is in a perpendicular face of the rock. Directly in front of this is a high natural detached arch, through which you see the cave. Scramble up to it, for the base of the hill from which it rises is at an angle of about sixty degrees with the river. Pass through the arch, and still climb on many yards till you reach Reynard's Cave. Now, look down, through the arch, upon the river; and look up to the ridge over the arch, and there you will see the spot on which I saw Mr. Glover. If you try to go there, you

<sup>1</sup> 1856.



will probably break your neck in the attempt. The way to it is up the hill, to the left, from the cave, till you are as high as the ridge over the arch. This is just the spot on which I stood, when Mr. Glover asked me to come to him. Moreover, he balanced himself and danced upon the ridge, and vaulted from thence across to the opposite rock (namely, the rock over Reynard's Cave). I could not go along it.' Yet there was 'this mountain of a man'<sup>1</sup> with club feet more foolishly daring than I was, or any school lad I ever saw. I have seen many daring fellows try to get to this place, without being able to do it.' If this was a true picture of John Glover at the time to which it refers, it cannot be a too highly coloured one to represent him as he was some twenty years younger, when our Society was founded.

Though he played thus when he played, he worked also when he worked. He would be in the meadows of a summer morning, and his sketch-book was always with him at hand, as he went to attend his pupils. And in the winter, when the ground has been covered with snow, he made studies of cattle in the fold-yard. Nothing escaped his observation, and he never lost an opportunity of noting down anything that was worth remembering. 'I was with him,' writes the companion above quoted, 'at Penmaenmawr in North Wales, in a thunderstorm, when he stopped to sketch some donkeys with their backs raised like a pent-house, the water streaming off them; and, when he was on his way to Dovedale, he alighted at the Green Man at Ashbourne from the "Derby Dilly" "<sup>2</sup> and made an admirable drawing of a goat, which he afterwards exhibited. Thus he was always ready for his work, and thus he obtained a freedom of hand and a general knowledge of form and effect, which enabled him to produce pictures of any subject and size with rapidity and ease.'

In 1795, 1799, 1801, 1803, and 1804, Glover had altogether had about sixteen works in the Academy exhibitions, from one to six a year. Only one was hung in the great room, namely a 'Sunset' in 1799. This was doubtless his *début* as a painter in oils. In 1804 he had a view of the Trossachs, before which time his subjects had chiefly been taken from Derbyshire and Wales.

<sup>1</sup> He weighed eighteen stone.

<sup>2</sup> 'Dilly' is short for *diligence*; and the above name was given to a coach running between Derby and Ashbourne. It is referred to by Canning in the *Anti-Jacobin*. See also *Athenæum*, 16 Oct. 1886, p. 497, on Pendleton's *History of Derbyshire*.

The WILLIAM HAVELL who was found sketching at Dolgelly by the Varleys in 1802, and at Ross by Cornelius Varley and Cristall in 1803, and who made a cock-shy of his palette in the market-place, was a young man just entering the profession, when he joined these friends as another member of the new Society. Probably he was the youngest of the brotherhood, his birthday being the 9th of February, 1782. His father, though a teacher of drawing, who lived and practised at Reading, was not over-anxious that his sons should follow the same calling. For he had not found it lucrative enough to depend on for the maintenance of himself and his wife and a family of fourteen children. By way of supplement he had had to open a small shop which brought him a steadier income. Several of the family, however, took to art in one form or another,<sup>1</sup> among whom William, the third son out of eight, was by far the most distinguished. He had been told off to the shop, but showed his desire to be an artist by seizing every opportunity of improving his power over the pencil. He was obliged to foster this taste in private ; but one day his father surprised him while he was finishing a sketch, and he surprised his father by the evidence it afforded of a secretly nurtured talent. He was then permitted to follow his bent, and turned out to gather a wholesome art-pasture on the Welsh mountain side. But he had first been provided with a good classical education under Dr. Valpy at the Reading grammar school, where his father held the post of drawing master. In 1804 he showed the results of his study, in the three first drawings which he exhibited at Somerset House, two of Caernarvon Castle, and the third of Nant Francon. It may be assumed that they were of such merit as to justify his admission to the body which he now joined, at the age of twenty-three.

The new method of Turner, Girtin, and Varley, wherein local tints were laid in at once, and the design advanced with the corresponding shadows, was practised by Havell also. He painted in oil as well as water-colour, and was destined to hold a high place in the British school of landscape. His address in the Academy Catalogue of 1804 is '6 Clipstone Street, Fitzroy Square,' and in the next year he is at '61 Poland Street.'

Two more foundation members, of less distinction, have yet to be mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> There are eleven of the name Havell mentioned in Graves's *Dictionary of Artists*.

JAMES HOLWORTHY was born on the 10th of April, 1781. He is said to have been an intimate friend of J. M. W. Turner's;<sup>1</sup> and he appears to have been a pupil of Glover's.<sup>2</sup> He exhibited three Welsh views at the Royal Academy in 1803 and 1804; but otherwise little is known of him before the time of his joining the Society. His address in the first catalogue is '4 Mount Street, Grosvenor Square.'

STEPHEN FRANCIS RIGAUD, a figure-painter, was, according to Redgrave,<sup>3</sup> 'a student of the Royal Academy, and first appears as an exhibitor in 1797, and for many years was an occasional contributor both of portraits and of subject pictures, sacred and classic. In 1801 he gained the Academy gold medal for his historical painting, 'Clytemnestra exulting over Agamemnon.' His address was '71 Great Titchfield Street.'

<sup>1</sup> Bemrose's *Life and Works of Wright of Derby* (1885), p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> 'Letter to I\*\*\* A\*\*\*\*\*, Esq., *A connoisseur in London*, by William Carey, p. 15.' Privately printed, Manchester, 1809.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of the English School*.





## BOOK IV

### THE WATER-COLOUR SOCIETY, 1805-1812

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#### CHAPTER I

##### IN BROOK STREET, 1805, 1806

The Brook Street Rooms—Their antecedent uses—First Exhibition of the Society (1805)—Sale-clerk, a novelty—Classes of subjects—Profits divided—First Associates—Their previous biographies—*Miss Byrne—J. J. Chalon—Robert Freebairn—William Delamotte—P. S. Munn—R. R. Reinagle—John Smith—Francis Stevens—John Thurston—Glover and Gilpin—Wells* elected President—Second Exhibition (1806)—Its contents—Profits divided—Shelley and his portraits—Smith a Member—New Associates—Their previous biographies—*Thomas Heaphy—Natural v. Academic teaching—Augustus Pugin*—Birth and descent—Escape from France—Mathews the actor—With John Nash—Architectural drawings.

THUS there were assembled sixteen practitioners in water-colours to join their forces in an Exhibition, which should show the public of what their art was capable, when standing on its own foundation. The next thing was to determine the *locus in quo*. A set of two rooms were found, apparently well suited to the purpose; being in a central situation, and already familiar to amateurs and collectors. They were at No. 20 Lower Brook Street, not far from the spot where the scheme had been hatched in George Street, Hanover Square. They had been built for show or sale rooms, by Gerard Vandergucht, one of a well-known Flemish family of artists, who flourished for more than a hundred years in England as engravers, painters, and dealers in objects of art. Gerard died on the 18th of March, 1776, aged eighty. His stock-in-trade, comprising a large collection of engravings, was sold in the following year; and Benjamin Vandergucht, his thirty-second child,<sup>1</sup> relinquishing portraiture for picture dealing, succeeded

<sup>1</sup> They were a prolific race these Vanderguchts; the thirty-two were born of one mother, who survived her husband.

to the business,<sup>1</sup> admitting the public to see his collection of pictures<sup>2</sup> on payment of one shilling. Benjamin was drowned in the Thames in 1794, not far from Hogarth's grave in Chiswick churchyard; and this collection came in its turn under Christie's hammer in 1796. After that, Thomas Barker, known as 'Barker of Bath' and celebrated for his picture of 'The Woodman,' had an exhibition of his works in the Brook Street Gallery. From him the rooms passed into the hands of the painter, Henry Tresham, who, on returning from Rome, opened the gallery in association with 'several other gentlemen picture dealers,' for the sale of 'Raphaels, Correggios, and *stuff*,' as some of them proved. Becoming a Royal Academician, however, in 1799, and engaged in literary and other work, he had no further occasion for the great room, and let it, with its appurtenances, to the Water-Colour Society.<sup>3</sup> In the days of the Vanderguchts, this house in Lower Brook Street was distinguished by the sign of the *Golden Head*.<sup>4</sup>

When the numbering of the houses was altered at a later period of the nineteenth century, No. 20 Brook Street (or Lower Brook Street, as it was sometimes called) became No. 54. An inspection of this and the adjoining number on each side (viz. 56 and 54A) seems to show that the old rooms, now divided, originally extended along the backs of these houses. Behind No. 56 there is a ware-room with a raised skylight, which has evidently been built for an exhibition gallery.

Here, on Monday, the 22nd of April, 1805, the Exhibition was at last opened to the public, with the announcement quoted in the Introduction to this history. The plan, now adopted in similar exhibitions, of placing an attendant in the room with a price-book of pictures for sale, and a register of purchasers' names, was introduced as a new experiment. The novelty, if any, seems to have consisted in the power given to the clerk to enter into an agreement for sale, and receive a deposit of ten per cent. to secure the purchase. In the exhibitions at Somerset House, it does not appear to have been the practice at this period even to give information as to the prices of

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 130, Stanley's edition of Bryan's *Dictionary of Painters and Engravers*, and Redgrave's *Dictionary of Artists of the English School*. Redgrave says, that Benjamin was a son of Gerard's brother John, an engraver who helped Hogarth, and died in the same year as he did, aged seventy-nine.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Beechey exhibited some of his works here. See Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy*, i. 311.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, *ubi supra*.

<sup>4</sup> See Royal Academy Catalogue, 1771; address of Benjamin Vandergucht.



pictures for sale, though, in the early catalogues, such works were distinguished by an asterisk. 'But there had been greater facilities at the Incorporated Society of Artists. In the catalogue of the exhibition of 1770, at Spring Gardens, is, for the first time, the following announcement: 'The Public are desired to take notice that the numbers and prices of such performances as are to be disposed of, are left with the assistant secretary, who attends in the room.' The Free Society employed a similar attendant, sometimes a woman.

'The experiment thus fairly started succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations of its projectors. The exhibition was daily crowded with visitors. Connoisseurs, *dilettanti*, artists, and critics, vied with each other in loud commendations of the collected works. The noble in rank and the leaders of fashion graced it with their presence. An eager curiosity seized upon those who claimed to live in the exclusive region of taste.'<sup>1</sup> Pyne tells us that among those who offered the warmest congratulations on the success of the undertaking were many of the leading Academicians. In the seven weeks during which the exhibition remained open, nearly 12,000 persons paid for admission. Not only were the rooms thus crowded, but, what was yet more gratifying, the visitors 'appeared emulous to become purchasers of the works exhibited. Hitherto, very few instances could be named of the pictures of living artists being disposed of at a public exhibition; whilst here, the room at once became an excellent mart for sale.'<sup>2</sup>

All the sixteen members were represented by works in the gallery, but their contributions to the joint show varied considerably in quantity. John Varley sent no less than 42 works, Pyne and Shelley 28 each, Glover and Hills 23 each, Wells 21, Gilpin 20, Pocock 17, Nicholson 14, Havell and Cornelius Varley 12 each, Barret 11, Cristall 8, Rigaud 6, and Holworthy and Nattes 5 each. As was to be expected, the main strength of the collection lay in its landscapes. But the figure element was present also, and it gave a variety to this first gathering, the absence of which was complained of a few years after, when landscape seems to have acquired an all but absolute dominion.<sup>3</sup> It is true that the works of Shelley, Rigaud, and even Cristall, whatever may have been their actual merits, did not

<sup>1</sup> J. J. MS.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 131.

<sup>3</sup> See *Repository of Arts*, iii. 423, on Exhibition of 1810; and *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 127 on that of 1824.

entirely represent the figure school which then existed among water-colour draftsmen. Of its most characteristic branch we find nothing as yet on the Society's walls. It was only in later years, and in a younger generation, that the illustrative school of Blake, Stothard, Westall, and others made its appearance in the water-colour exhibitions. Artists of their class had found full employment in making designs for the embellishment of books, and thus had not suffered in the same way as the landscape painters from competition with oil pictures. Nor was there at first much more than a suggestion of that species of figure painting which concerns itself with present life and the aspect of the world we live in, such as existed in the works of Gainsborough, and had been continued by Morland, Ibbetson, and others, and (largely mixed with caricature) in those of a real genius in his way, Thomas Rowlandson. This would have formed the true counterpart of the class of natural landscape which was now being brought into such marked significance. It was only present here in a few rustic figures of fishermen and others, and five studies for a work in hand on the costume of England, by Pyne, and a gipsy group by Wells. Including these, and eight portraits by Shelley, the figure subjects formed less than 20 per cent. of the whole collection. About half a dozen were pure allegory; <sup>1</sup> conspicuous among them a tribute by Shelley to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds, to whom his own art was so much indebted. Herein 'Painting overcome with Grief is consoled by Sculpture, who presents her with a medallion of Sir Joshua, for the Genii of Taste to convey to the Temple of Fame,' &c. &c. Reynolds had then been dead thirteen years. The remainder were subjects from the poets, sacred history, heathen mythology, and the classic fancy of the artist. Motives derived from English history or fiction were absent altogether. The art exhibited in these imaginative works was not of a progressive kind. Their ideal of beauty, never very robust, has since gone out of fashion. Nor was it destined long to survive. It had to die and be forgotten ere a fresh æsthetic impulse, reflecting archaic models of quite another stamp, came to create the poetic figure-school followed by certain of our painters in water-colours in recent times.

In matters of technique, however, the works of Shelley and Rigaud afford, in the painting of the figure, examples of a method bearing

<sup>1</sup> One of Shelley's, 'Memory gathering the flowers cropped by Time,' is now in the South Kensington Museum.

the same relation to the process in common use before their time, as that of the landscape draftsmen in local colour bore to the old-fashioned tinting of topographic views. Examples of the strong-outline and grey-and-wash process applied to the figure must be sought for in the drawings of *Sandby*, *De Loutherbourg*, *Dayes*, *Mortimer*, *Wheatley*, *Rowlandson*, *Alexander*, and many others. Of the more complete practice, the leading representative appears to have been *Richard Westall*, R.A., whose name is specially associated with a reform of figure-painting in water-colours corresponding to that which Turner and Girtin have the credit of effecting in landscape.<sup>1</sup> *William Hamilton*, R.A. (b. 1751, d. 1801), and *Shelley* were of the same class as Westall.

But the great majority of the drawings in this first exhibition were, as has been above said, landscapes, of one kind or another. And it was in this department that the change was chiefly manifest which had come over water-colour drawing. Here there was visible just enough, both of the old motives and of the old processes in painting, to indicate the states of art and practice out of which the present developments had sprung. The early tinted manner survived in the works of Pocock, old architectural topography in those of Nattes; and in one or two examples by Gilpin there was just a reminder of the old craze for 'gentlemen's seats.' The 'classic' or ideal element derived from Claude and Poussin, which had been paramount in our landscape art until the time of Gainsborough, was also present, and probably reigned over a group of 'compositions,' so named, among the drawings sent by Glover, Havell, and Varley, and, in nearly all cases, over the works of Barret. Under the generic names 'landscape,' 'view from nature,' 'a lake scene,' &c., may also have been included representations more or less characteristic of particular kinds of scenery, without the aim of giving importance to an actual locality. But by far the larger number of the landscapes belonged to the class which might still be called topographic, though in that wider acceptance of the term which does not exclude from its scope mere natural scenery, provided that the features peculiar to a given spot are duly recorded. It was the form of landscape in which the classic school on the one hand, and the 'dry-as-dust' topography of the olden time on the other, had finally met and merged. Except eight views in

<sup>1</sup> See *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 46; and *Century of Painters*, i. 408.



Norway by Wells,<sup>1</sup> and a few others of small importance, the whole of the remaining landscapes were scenes in the British Isles, forty-three per cent. being from Wales. Of these Welsh views more than two-fifths are by John Varley, besides from three to seven drawings each by Cristall, Havell, Nicholson, Pocock, and Cornelius Varley, all belonging to the Celtic contingent. The North of England, chiefly Yorkshire with her abbeys, supplied the subjects of twenty-four drawings by various artists; and ten, mostly by Nicholson, were from Scotland. Gilpin brought six Irish views from the Lakes of Killarney.

There were two further ingredients which varied the interest of the exhibition as a whole, namely: Hills's studies of cattle, sheep, and deer; and a series of spirited drawings by Pocock, of British sea-fights, some of the great engagements that had taken place within the memory of all visitors to the gallery. Such pictures were not then, as they are now, mere reflections of the historic past, but contained matter of stirring present interest. Nelson himself was alive, though to die in the coming October.

These two hundred and seventy-five drawings have long been dispersed, beyond all power to trace more than a very few. Some, perhaps, have perished, and of what remain many are sadly faded, we may be sure. Beyond a meagre tradition, little is left to give us an estimate of what this first exhibition was like, or the actual quality of its contents, except bare names as they stand in the catalogue, and some knowledge of what their owners did in after years. But even from the titles of their works we can tell something of the painter's intentions. It is noteworthy how some of them are in the habit of specifying among the chief motives of their pictures, the kind of weather, the time of day, and the various 'effects' under which the scene they depict is represented. Among Barret's works, for example, we have 'An Evening Effect,' 'A Twilight Effect,' 'A Mountain Scene after Rain.' Of Glover's, such notes enter into more than half the descriptions. 'Morning,' 'Stormy Sunset,' 'Evening,' 'Mid-day,'

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Jenkins saw one of these drawings of Wells's, the 'Fortress of Frederickshall on the frontier of Norway, where Charles XII. lost his life,' long afterwards at the house of its possessor Mr. Henry Elliot, a lifelong friend of Wells's, to whom it was presented by the artist's family after his death. Mr. Elliot stated that he had known the drawing for more than thirty years, but could observe no change in its appearance. Mr. Jenkins describes it as 'representing a mountainous country, fir woods and water, under the effect of evening, when the sun touches with a mellow light the distant hill tops, and pencils with deeper gold the glowing stems of the pine forests;—a work that favourably displays the artist's power over colour and effect.' (J. J. J. MSS.)

'A Partial Shower,' 'Thunderstorm at Sunset,' 'Moonlight,' 'Snow,' 'Singular Effect of a Thunderstorm,' 'Sunshine and Distant Rain,' 'Still, warm Evening.' All these memoranda occur in titles of his drawings in this first exhibition. And Pocock, like a true sailor, duly notes the distinctions of 'breeze' and 'gale' and 'storm,' and whether they be 'fresh' or 'strong.' That Nicholson made his mark, we learn on the evidence of Pyne, who tells us that 'the discovery of' that painter's 'process for preserving the heightenings pure and clean in touch threw a light upon this department of study. From the time his drawings appeared upon the walls of the first exhibition of the Society, many of its members, professors of landscape, wrought their elegant designs with a greater degree of force and effect.' The powers and capacities in the materials which they exhibit had, he contends, been developed by Nicholson alone.<sup>1</sup>

What was the contemporary verdict, as to the comparative merits of the sixteen painters now brought together, it would be difficult to discover; for there were not then the host of art journals and a critics that we have now, to gauge or guide the public taste. But a record has been preserved, in the Society's minutes, of the estimates made by the artists themselves of the value of their own work. In accordance with the rule, wise or otherwise, which had been prescribed for the distribution of any available residue of profits, each member had to make a valuation of his accepted works. The aggregate amount of these valuations was 2,860*l.*, whereof Shelley set himself down as contributing a share of attraction worth 743*l.* 8*s.*; Glover's estimate was 507*l.* 3*s.*; and others named smaller sums, down to a modest 44*l.* 12*s.* 6*d.* by Cornelius Varley. These various sums, on being compared with the numbers of drawings sent in by the different members, give for each the average price per exhibit, and the consequent order of self-estimation, appearing in the following list.

1. Shelley . . .	£26 10 6	9. Wells . . .	£7 0 0
2. Glover . . .	22 1 0	10. Cristall . . .	6 13 0
3. Pocock . . .	13 0 0	11. Havell . . .	5 14 0
4. Nattes . . .	12 2 6	12. Nicholson . . .	5 12 0
5. Hills . . .	10 18 0	13. J. Varley . . .	4 14 0
6. Rigaud . . .	10 2 6	14. Barret . . .	4 9 6
7. Gilpin . . .	9 18 0	15. Pyne . . .	4 8 0
8. Holworthy . . .	9 0 0	16. C. Varley . . .	3 14 0

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 30, 31.

On this showing, the average price of a drawing was about 10*l.* 11*s.* It need scarcely be said that the foregoing table of precedence does not in all cases agree with the verdict of posterity as to the merits of the artists named therein.

The exhibition closed on the 8th of June, and the founders met to ascertain their position. They had never ventured to hope that, in its early stages, their enterprise would do more than pay its expenses. They must therefore have been agreeably surprised to find that the public admissions had been so numerous as to bring to the door a sum of more than 577*l.*, and leave in the treasurer's hands, after all expenses paid, a surplus of nearly 272*l.* This sum, in accordance with the above-mentioned rule, was duly divided among the members, in shares varying from 5*l.* 7*s.* 6*d.* to 61*l.* 18*s.* 6*d.* proportioned to the declared values of their contributions to the gallery.

Encouraged by this success, the founders began to prepare on a larger scale for a second exhibition in the ensuing year. At the first anniversary meeting, on the 30th of November, it was resolved that the number of contributors should be augmented by the formation of a new class, called 'FELLOW-EXHIBITORS.' They were not to exceed sixteen, and from them future Members were to be chosen. Their privilege to exhibit did not extend to more, it seems, than five drawings at a time. It was further agreed that two Members should thus be added every year until their number should reach twenty-four, beyond which limit there was to be no further extension. Gilpin, Shelley, and Hills were reappointed to their respective offices of President, Treasurer, and Secretary; and with Pocock, Glover, and John Varley, constituted the new Committee.

On the 30th of December,<sup>1</sup> 1805, the following nine artists were selected, out of sixteen candidates proposed by the different members, for Associate-Exhibitors,<sup>2</sup> namely: *Anne Frances Byrne, John James Chalon, William Delamotte, Robert Freebairn, Paul Sandby Munn, Richard Ramsay Reinagle, John Smith, Francis Stevens, and from John Thurston.*

ANNE FRANCES BYRNE was one of a family of artistic children

<sup>1</sup> By reason of elections having taken place at the end of the year previous to that in which an exhibitor's name can first appear in the catalogue, slight errors of dates have sometimes been made in biographies hitherto published.

<sup>2</sup> The name 'Fellow-Exhibitor' is used in the first two years' catalogues, and 'Associate-Exhibitor' afterwards.



left by the William Byrne who engraved Hearne's 'Antiquities of Great Britain.' Scarcely three months before his daughter's election he had died in Titchfield Street, at the age of about sixty-two, while engaged in producing the first part of a series of prints, which were continued for a number of years, under the title *Britannia Depicta*. It contained views by Hearne, Turner, Farington, John Smith, and Alexander, but latterly by Farington alone. Other eminent line engravers, including Middiman, Landseer, and Pye, were afterwards employed on the work, together with three of William Byrne's children, John, Elizabeth, and Letitia Byrne. It will be necessary to speak further of John Byrne, the youngest, and the only boy of the family, as a water-colour painter.

Anne Frances was the eldest child, and born in London in 1775 (the birth year of Turner and Girtin). She seems to have taken to art *con amore*, giving up for its practice a course of more lucrative teaching in which she had been engaged, and devoting herself to painting fruit and flowers in water-colours. She had exhibited such subjects since 1796 at the Royal Academy, and now took her place as the first representative of that branch of art in the Society's annual show. 'Her flowers,' says Redgrave, who gives us the above facts in his *Dictionary*, 'were well grouped, and with great richness of colour combine a charming freshness; but, with the exception of a bird exhibited on one or two occasions, her art was confined to fruit and flowers.' There is a study of flowers by her at South Kensington grouped after the manner of the Dutch painters De Heem and Van Huysum, and embellished with as liberal a sprinkling of bees, butterflies, dewdrops, and other minute accessories, as one is apt to look for in the works of those masters. It appears that flower-pieces were not encouraged in the early days of the Society, and that the admission of Miss Byrne's works was made a special exception to a rule relative to their exclusion. The rule was, however, rescinded in January 1809. Miss Byrne, was moreover the first lady-artist who had been admitted into the Society, and as such was held to occupy a peculiar position. The special provisions applicable to her class, while they assumed disabilities of her sex in the conduct of business, which are in modern times less rigidly insisted on, were not wanting in chivalrous generosity. 'Ladies associate-exhibitors,' says the writer of an early notice of the Society,<sup>1</sup> 'as they can never share

<sup>1</sup> See *Microcosm of London* (1808), ii. 33.

actively in the management of the Society's affairs, are not eligible as members; but from the moment of their election they become entitled to partake of the *profits* of the exhibition in the same proportion as the members, while they are exempt from the trouble of official duties, and from every responsibility whatever on account of any *losses* incurred by the Society.'

The name *Chalon* is more commonly associated, in the history of modern painting, with *Alfred Edward Chalon*, the younger of two brothers, of whom the new exhibitor, JOHN JAMES CHALON, was the elder. The two were, however, so closely united in many respects that it is not easy to treat of one without the other. Alfred attained to higher distinction, enjoying Court patronage, and a unique position as the fashionable portrait painter in water-colours. John, though a clever designer, did not exhibit many pictures, and was little appreciated by the public. But he and his merit as an artist were widely known and recognized in the private and professional circles wherein the brothers moved as inseparable companions during their long lives. John Chalon was twenty-seven (Varley's age) when he was chosen as an associate. Alfred was nearly five years younger. They had been entered as students of the Royal Academy (whereof both were in after years to become full members) in 1796 and 1797 respectively; both having, like so many other successful artists, abandoned the drudgery of commercial pursuits to follow their common bent.

They came of a Huguenot family 'who left France on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and long resided in Geneva, where' both the artist brothers were born. Their 'grandfather served as a volunteer in a French Protestant regiment in Ireland, under King William III., and was wounded at the battle of the Boyne. On the reverses which followed the French Revolution in 1789 the family came to England, and the father was appointed professor of the French language and literature at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, and afterwards settled with his family at Kensington.'<sup>1</sup>

John Chalon had as yet shown himself only as a painter in oils, having exhibited at the Academy in that medium since 1800. At first he had some figure pictures there of the *genre* class, but in 1804 or 1805 his works had all been landscapes, and it is chiefly as a landscape painter that he now joined the water-colour school.

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

ROBERT FREEBAIRN also belonged to the landscape class, and was in the main a painter in oil. He was of the earlier generation, had been a pupil of Wilson's, the last that master taught, and on his death in 1782 had gone to Italy to study. From that year he sent pictures to the Royal Academy, and returning to London in 1792 he continued to exhibit Italian landscapes at Somerset House. He was forty when he joined the Society. His place was not in the front rank. But Redgrave describes his works as 'carefully and neatly finished,' and his colour 'brilliant and pleasing.' Hakewill in his 'Tour' couples Freebairn with Wilson, Cozens, and Smith as one of the great depicitors of Italy.

WILLIAM DELAMOTTE'S surname implies, like Chalon's, a French extraction.<sup>1</sup> He was a young man of five-and-twenty, who had, two years before, been appointed drawing master at the Great Marlow Military Academy. He had previously lived at Oxford. Wales, Cumberland, and Derbyshire had been his rural sketching grounds, and Girtin's works the models of his style. Like that painter, he had also sketched in Paris during the short Peace of Amiens in 1802; and some half-dozen views of Oxford,<sup>2</sup> which with Welsh and other landscapes he had exhibited at Somerset House between 1796 and 1805 showed him capable of strengthening the architectural element in the Society. Delamotte had begun his art-education as an Academy student, and had even been for a short time a pupil of West's, but had taken to modern landscape as a branch of art more suited to his abilities than the severer school to which such teaching naturally led.

Little is known of PAUL SANDBY MUNN, except that he had lived at Greenwich, and had since 1798 been exhibiting, at the Academy, landscape drawings of picturesque subjects, cottages and the like, from the Isle of Wight, the English Lakes, and North Wales. His baptismal name provokes speculation, in seeming to point to a family connexion with landscape art. There was, indeed, a James Munn, who exhibited six landscape drawings in the old societies' galleries from 1764 to 1774; and Redgrave plausibly

<sup>1</sup> The name Delamotte occurs among those of the many French Huguenot refugees who settled at Canterbury. (Kershaw's *French Protestants in their English Homes*, p. 135.)

<sup>2</sup> A plate of 'Oxford, from Ferry Hinksey,' in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, is dated 1804.



suggests that this may have been a relation. Possibly it was his father. The younger Munn is said to have died at the age of seventy-two in 1845, and could thus have been born within a year of the time when the elder ceased to exhibit, and perhaps to live. It may be that he was a devotee of Sandby's art, and desired to dedicate his infant son to service at the same shrine. It would be easy to weave a pretty romance to suit the case. But there is no tradition to support it, and it must be confessed that Munn junior, though he painted agreeably in the old-fashioned way, did not inherit the talent of a Sandby, any more than did *Raphael* Smith, or *Claude* Nattes, or *Anthony Vandyke* Fielding, or *Julius Cæsar*<sup>1</sup> Ibbetson repeat the greatness of the names their parents had given them.

Munn was employed as a topographic draftsman by Britton, in whose *Beauties of England and Wales* are eight plates after his drawings or sketches, with the following dates of publication, namely: 'Stoke Park' (sketched by Britton), 1802; 'Fowey Harbour,' 'Llanercost,' 'Wolford Lodge, Devon,' 'The Monnow Bridge &c., Monmouthshire,' 'Buildwas Abbey, Salop,' 'Wenlock Abbey, Salop,' 1803, and 'Farleigh House, Somerset,' 1813.

RICHARD RAMSAY REINAGLE is another painter whose baptism records artistic descent; for his second name is doubtless derived from the fact that his father had been a pupil of Allan Ramsay, portrait painter to the Court of King George the Third. The father was Philip Reinagle, A.R.A., and afterwards R.A., to each of which suffixes the son also became, for a time at least, entitled.

The earlier painter of the name, during a career of about fifty-five years, which began with the exhibition of a work in 1773, seems to have studied nature, for subjects on his canvas, in a descending order through creation. For, beginning with portraiture of the lords thereof, he after a time found greater fascination in lower types of life, painting horses, hunting-pieces, dogs, and birds, till, abandoning the animal kingdom, he subsided into landscape, and then illustrated a book on botany. He assisted Barker in some of his panoramas.<sup>2</sup> He had a wonderful knack, too, of copying Dutch pictures; and

<sup>1</sup> Ibbetson is said to have owed his heroic *pranomen* to the fact that he was brought into the world by the Cæsarian operation. One might cite the cases, too, of *Michael Angelo* Rooker and John *Buonarotti* Papworth, were it not that the second name was in theirs a *sobriquet* added after baptism.

<sup>2</sup> Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy*, i. 345.

his reproductions of the small cattle-pieces and landscapes of that school pass as originals.

Young Reinagle's taste seems to have obtained its direction from some of these later phases of his father's practice, and the opportunities of study which were given him accordingly. He was born on the 19th of March, 1775, and began to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1788, when he was but thirteen. As a young man he sketched in Italy and in Holland; and his style in the landscapes which chiefly engaged his prolific pencil showed signs of both these educational influences. His art, it need scarcely be said, was far from being confined to water-colours. He painted in oils; and had also worked in distemper on Robert Barker's panoramas.<sup>1</sup> In 1802, indeed, he had joined partnership with that artist's eldest son, Thomas Edward Barker, and set up, in a building afterwards converted into the Strand Theatre, a rival establishment to that in Leicester Square.<sup>2</sup>

With JOHN SMITH we have already made some acquaintance. He was the 'Warwick' or 'Italian' Smith whose name is associated with the great reform which was taking place in the practice of water-colour drawing at the close of the last century. A notice of his antecedents and method of work has already been given.<sup>3</sup> Now that the Society appeared to be established, he overcame his shyness, and allowed himself to be a candidate for admission. But he did not exercise the privilege of exhibiting until more than a year after it was acquired.

FRANCIS STEVENS, born 21 Nov. 1781 (possibly at Exeter, as he was called 'Stevens of Exeter,' and lived there at one time<sup>4</sup>), was another and a clever landscape draftsman, a pupil of Munn's, whose address, at 107 Bond Street, is that which he gives in the catalogue for 1806. He exhibited five studies and views at the Royal Academy in 1804 and 1805, from Middlesex, Yorkshire, and Notts. Rustic architecture was apparently his forte; and his first contributions to the Society showed that he had sketched in Yorkshire and elsewhere. There is at the South Kensington Museum a rather elaborate drawing by him of 'A Devonshire Cottage' dated 1806, probably one of the

<sup>1</sup> One of his panoramic views was of *Rome*. There is a copy of the printed 'Explanation' of it at the British Museum, 8vo, 1800 (?).

<sup>2</sup> This Strand concern was sold in 1816 to Henry Aston Barker and John Burford.

<sup>3</sup> See Book I., chap. vi.

<sup>4</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

identical works contributed on his election. It is harmonious and warm in tone, 'painted in local colour, the lights boldly taken out ;' but the figures are too small for the buildings.

JOHN THURSTON was of the figure department, and represented, though incompletely, the school of illustration which was wanting in the first exhibition. He had been a copper-plate engraver, and worked with James Heath, on whose 'Death of Major Pierson' and 'Dead Soldier' his burin was employed. But he was chiefly known as a designer of book illustrations, for the most part<sup>1</sup> drawn on the block for wood-engraving. The following works contain cuts from his designs : Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, 8vo (Tegg), 1804 (frontispiece); Thomson's *Seasons*, royal 8vo, 1805 (cuts by Bewick); Beattie's *Minstrel*, 4to, 1807 (cuts by Clennell); Rev. J. Thomas's *Religious Emblems*, 4to, Ackermann, 1809 (cuts by Branston, Clennell, and Nesbit); G. Marshall's *Epistles in Verse* (cuts by Branston); G. A. Stevens's *Lecture on Heads*, 12mo (47 cuts of heads by Nesbit). He seems, at the time of his election, to have been preparing a set of small groups for an edition of Shakspeare, published by Whittingham in 1814. Five such groups were what he sent to the exhibition of 1806. Most likely they were in his usual manner,<sup>2</sup> tinted over Indian ink. These were the only drawings he exhibited with the Society. His figures were neatly executed with a firm line, but too often wanting in natural expression. He was born at Scarborough in 1774, had sixteen works at the Royal Academy between 1794 and 1829, and died at Holloway in 1822.

With these additions to their number, the Society proceeded with the arrangements for their second exhibition, to take place in the ensuing season. They had already been seeking for a more commodious gallery than that in Brook Street, and had applied to Mr. Christie the auctioneer for the rooms then held by him in Pall Mall, the same that had been occupied by the Royal Academy before its removal to Somerset House. Unable, however, to come to terms in time, they had to fall back upon the former for one more exhibition, under a fresh lease of 10*l.* a week from Mr. Tresham. But (as

<sup>1</sup> There are four designs of his engraved in stipple by Ridley in an edition of Zimmermann's *Solitude*, 2 vols. fcp. 8vo. (Vernor and Hood), 1804, 1805.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Percy had an illustration by him of Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, '4.45 x 8.45—outlined with pencil and pen, and tinted.' (*Percy Catalogue*.)



announced in a fly-leaf of the catalogue for 1806) they secured the old Academy rooms for the following year.

The exhibitors, generally speaking, had had good reason to be satisfied with the success of their first venture. Glover appears to have been so much so, that he gave up his establishment at Lichfield, and settled himself in London, at No. 3 Montagu Square. The result was not so satisfactory to one at least of the other members. It was no benefit to poor Gilpin. The apparent inferiority of his performances to those of some, at least, of his companions in art, had the effect of alienating his pupils. He lost much of his great practice as a drawing master, and of the extensive connexion which he had commanded through his uncle the Academician, and his brother the literary amateur. He continued indeed to exhibit drawings with the Society, but the move he made was the reverse of Glover's. He retired from town to settle in the country, accepting an engagement as a drawing master at the Royal Military College, Great Marlow, subordinate, it is presumed, to that of William Delamotte. On the 24th of March, 1806, on thus leaving London, he vacated the presidential chair, much to the Society's regret. Pocock was chosen to supply his place; but he refusing the post, they elected Wells.

The second 'annual' exhibition, still at Brook Street, opened on Monday, the 21st of April, and closed on Saturday, the 14th of June, 1806. The 301 pictures which it contained were contributed in the following proportions; prolific John Varley again heading the list with even one more than in 1805, and Hills rising to the second place with almost as many.

J. Varley . . . 43	Gilpin . . . 10	Chalon . . . 5
Hills . . . 40	Havell . . . 10	Munn . . . 5
Nicholson . . . 26	Pyne . . . 10	Reinagle . . . 5
Pocock . . . 24	Cristall . . . 9	Stevens . . . 5
Glover . . . 20	Shelley . . . 9	Thurston . . . 5
Barret . . . 18	Rigaud . . . 8	Freebairn . . . 3
Wells . . . 17	Holsworthy . . . 7	Delamotte . . . 2
Nattes . . . 12	C. Varley . . . 7	Miss Byrne . . . 1

The strength of the collection lay again, we may be sure, in the sound broad treatment of landscape, real and imaginary, by Varley and Havell; in the repose and sunshine of Barret's classic drawings

in Nicholson's views, powerful and deep in tone; and Glover's less solid, but luminous and suggestive realizations of nature.

One of the chief things that strike the eye, on a perusal of the list, is that nearly one-half of *John Varley's* works are now described as 'compositions.' The same thing was to happen in the end of that artist's career, when, having nearly ceased to sketch from nature, he relied almost entirely on his memory and imagination. But the fancy drawings of this early period were of a different class. They had in all probability been examples given to his pupils in certain general principles of landscape art, which he practised himself, and taught as their expositor, and which were recognized, as the rules of common guidance, by the school whereof he and the leading members of the Society constituted the core. One of *Cristall's* drawings, representing youths bathing, illustrative of some lines in Thomson's 'Summer,' Pyne speaks of as 'a design that would have done credit to any of our ancient schools,' and could not have been expressed in a better medium for the purpose than water-colour.<sup>1</sup> *Shelley* seems to have drawn so largely already on his stock of imaginative pictures, that he now sends but two (a 'Holy Family,' and 'Love disappointed' after the flattering tale told by Hope, a subject suggested by a popular ballad of the time), and makes up his number with portraits; while *Rigaud* represents the Death of Nelson, in due allegoric form, the King of Terrors inverting his torch, and Victory and eternal Fame assisting at the ceremony.

When the exhibition closed and the committee again took stock, it was found, that there were 12,439 checks of admission, which, as before at one shilling, would produce 621*l.* 19*s.* And the sale of catalogues, for which an extra sixpence was now demanded, increased the gross receipts to 764*l.* 16*s.* A balance of 440*l.* 3*s.*, after paying expenses, was divided, in like manner as before, among the sixteen members, with the addition of Miss Byrne, who seems to have been allowed to participate under the polite arrangement above mentioned.

The principle of apportionment, however, dependent as it was upon each member's estimate of his own works, was already beginning to be scrutinized. It was naturally considered that the portraits, of which Shelley had sent so large a number, and which could not fairly be said to promote the Society's objects, did not justly entitle him to a share of profits on their account. Resolutions to that effect were

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 195.

passed by two general meetings in the ensuing spring. The immediate result was that Shelley resigned the treasurership, much to the Society's regret. He was replaced in that office by Reinagle, who, together with 'Warwick' Smith, had been raised to the rank of Member at the anniversary meeting of 1 Dec. 1806. Glover, John Varley, Cristall, and Barret were the committee for 1807.

On the 23rd of March in that year, *Thomas Heaphy* and *Augustus Pugin* were selected as new Associates, out of nineteen candidates. This choice added in each case to the artistic strength of the Society; in the former to the figure department, in the latter to that of architectural delineation.

We are apt to boast, with good reason, of the native origin and character of our British school of water-colours. Yet several of its best practitioners have been of foreign descent. It was so with both these artists. THOMAS HEAPHY came from the Huguenot colony of silkweavers in Spitalfields, settled there after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. His father, John Heaphy, and mother (a Frenchwoman whose maiden name was Katharine Gerard), lived in the parish of Cripplegate, where Thomas was born. The date of that event is set down by Redgrave in his *Dictionary* as 29 December, 1775, probably on sufficient evidence; though in an earlier account given of him in the *Century of Painters* it was, on the authority, it seems, of the artist's son, stated to have been 'about 1779-80.' 'In his early years,' writes the son, in some manuscript memoranda, communicated also to Mr. Jenkins, 'he showed some inclination for art; and his father, doubtless with the intention of utilizing this predilection, apprenticed him to a dyer. This occupation being distasteful to him, his indentures were cancelled, and he was shortly after apprenticed to Meadows<sup>1</sup> the engraver, who had acquired reputation by his engravings from the works of Richard Westall.' Long after, on seeing the series of Westall's Sacraments on sale at the European Museum, Heaphy pointed them out to Pyne as 'old acquaintances,' saying, 'I worked many a month—nay, even for some years, on the large plates from these identical drawings.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Robert Mitchell Meadows engraved in the stipple manner for Boydell's *Shakespeare Gallery*, and after Westall, Hamilton, and others, and attained much distinction. He published in 1809 three lectures on engraving, and died some time before 1812. (Redgrave's *Dictionary*.)

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 354.



But young Heaphy, to whom the canvas was more attractive than the copper, used to spend the evenings, when he had done his master's work, at a place of instruction in art somewhere in Finsbury, conducted by a painter of the name of Simpson.<sup>1</sup> It seems to have been a good school, for it turned out several scholars well known afterwards in the profession; among them H. Ross, father of Sir W. C. Ross, R.A., and like his son a miniature painter.<sup>2</sup>

Heaphy moreover began to paint portraits, and exhibited them at Somerset House yearly, from 1797, when he made his *début* with a likeness of himself. With this exception, his sitters are for the most part female, and for some years exclusively so. In 1799 he sends a 'Portrait of Miss Stephenson,' and in 1800 one of 'Mrs. Heaphy,' together with 'Mrs. Meadows,' probably the wife of his master, the engraver. Miss Stephenson and Mrs. Heaphy were, in fact, one and the same person. She was the sister of a fellow-student at Simpson's, and Heaphy married her while he was still an apprentice.<sup>3</sup>

He had now to earn his bread, and for a time managed to subsist by colouring popular prints, on soft paper, after Westall's pictures. He was what was called a 'soft-print toucher.' When his time had expired at the engraver's he also became a student at the Royal Academy. While in the schools there, he gained no distinction in the shape of medal or premium, for he chose rather to follow his own ideas than conform to the prescribed course and tread the beaten track of study. The works of Westall, which he had had to observe so carefully, had not bred in his mind a reverence for the old masters. It was, indeed, too much the practice of eminent figure painters in his day to neglect the study of nature. In works of the fashionable class, of which Westall's drawings may be taken as the type, they were wont 'to adopt a certain conventional style of feature, even in the most familiar subjects, that stood in the stead of expression and individuality.' Against this and the teaching which led to it, Heaphy rebelled; and he passed the better part of his life in earnest and active hostility to the Royal Academy, and what he called 'academic

<sup>1</sup> It has also been stated that Heaphy was a pupil of a Mr. Boyne, who held a drawing school in Gloucester Street, Queen Square. See Arnold's *Magazine of the Fine Arts*, p. 222, 'Neglected Biography.' But his son does not mention this school.

<sup>2</sup> This is the account given by Heaphy's son, who adds the name of Thomas Uwins, R.A., among Simpson's scholars; but we find no reference to this alleged fact in Mrs. Uwins's life of her husband.

<sup>3</sup> His son spells the name *Stevenson*.

art.' Copying a motionless model, artificially posed in the studio, was not, as it seemed to him, drawing 'from the life.' For the subjects of his pencil he betook himself to the fields and the sea beach, and having an eye to the varied appearance of the world he lived in, gave to his original works a vitality and freshness to which the public had not been accustomed among figure draftsmen, at least not in those above the rank of caricaturists, like Rowlandson. Before the time of his entering the Society, however, this side of his art seems scarcely to have been presented to the public.

His son writes that his first subject-picture in water-colours was painted when he was about twenty-one or twenty-two, and represented a girl stooping over a river's bank to gather a water-lily. Except 'The Portland Fish Girl' in 1804, and perhaps a study called 'Watchfulness' in 1803, we find nothing of his of an earlier date in the Academy catalogues, except portraits. But in the latter department he had been rising rapidly. From portraying himself (which he did again in 1801), and his wife, and such ordinary folk, he had ascended to a more exalted patronage. In 1802 he represents in one picture the Russian Ambassador, Count Woronzow, and the Countess, Lady Palmerston, the Hon. W. and Miss Temple, and Lady Lavington; and the next year he appears as 'Portrait Painter to the Princess of Wales,' and exhibits portraits of her Royal Highness and other persons of rank. It is, however, exclusively as a painter of subjects from humble, or, it might more correctly be said, from low, life, that he was to make his appearance in the Society's exhibitions. Portraits, as we have seen, had been virtually excluded from the walls by what lawyers might call the 'rule in Shelley's case.' He had 'struck out,' says Pyne, 'a new and a pleasing style of execution, and manifested an excellent feeling for colouring. Indeed, he gave great presage of future excellence, by a very original path.'<sup>1</sup> His sentiment was not refined, but his works would at least be a relief to the conventional quality of Shelley's and of Rigaud's.

AUGUSTUS PUGIN was a Frenchman, at that time chiefly engaged in making professional drawings for Mr. John Nash, who built Regent Street, and was then rapidly acquiring his extensive business and fashionable repute.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 194.

Pugin was according to some authorities thirty-eight, and to others forty-five or so, when he joined the Society.<sup>1</sup> He came of a good family, being descended from 'a nobleman who raised a hundred soldiers for the service of Fribourg,' and for whose valour in defeating the same number of cavalry at Morat, besieged by Charles, Duke of Burgundy, in 1477, 'the senators augmented his arms *d'un oiseau sable*.'<sup>2</sup> When a young man in France he is said to have associated with distinguished artists, to have been intimate with David, and a companion of Isabey's. Monsieur Lafitte, a member of the Legion of Honour, and one of the household of the Emperor Napoleon I., who 'designed among other works the panel decorations of the "Arc de Triomphe" in the Place de Carrousel,' was his brother-in-law, and is said to have given him much instruction.<sup>3</sup> How he came to leave the land of his forbears (the ancestral black bird notwithstanding), has been variously related. Ferrey the architect (who was his pupil) reports that in the French Revolution Pugin fought for the king, and falling, was thrown with some hundred bodies into a pit near the Place de la Bastille, but swam the Seine, fled to Rouen, and thence escaped to England.<sup>4</sup> But the late Charles J. Mathews, the actor (another pupil), tells a different story. He says that Pugin, 'having fought a duel in Paris, which ended fatally, sought refuge in England, landed on the Welsh coast, and having great talent as an artist, earned his living for the time being by his pencil.'<sup>5</sup>

When Pugin first came to this country his condition was forlorn enough. He was a typical Frenchman of the *ancien régime*, with 'a three-cornered hat, a muff, a gold-headed cane,' and little or no knowledge of the English tongue. For some time his friends were unable to communicate with him; for when he called for his letters, the country postmaster failed to recognize, in his pronunciation, any hint of the name inscribed on a pile of correspondence that stood waiting to be claimed by its rightful owner, 'Mr. Puggen.' The story was afterwards told by Pugin to his friend Charles Mathews, the elder comedian of that name, who made from it one of his most celebrated

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Ferrey, in his *Recollections of Welby and Augustus Pugin* (p. 1), gives the date 1762 as that of the latter's birth; but states (p. 101) that he died in December 1832, 'at the age of 63.' Redgrave takes 1762 to be the true date. Other compilers give 1769.

<sup>2</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*. There is in the Art Library at South Kensington a copy of *The Magazine of Fine Arts*, vol. i. (1821), with a book-plate of the arms of 'Augustus de Pugin,' and the motto '*En avant*.'

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 30, 31.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, i. 39.



impersonations, combining humour and pathos, in the little piece called 'Monsieur Malet.'<sup>1</sup> Pugin, indeed, took credit for a larger share in the origin of Mathews's 'at homes;' for he was even wont to insist, in after years, that it was from himself that the comedian acquired his astonishing power of mimicry and personation.<sup>2</sup> In time the refugee succeeded in mastering our language, and spoke it perfectly, 'as far as volubility was concerned.' So at least says Mathews the younger (no bad judge of volubility), who knew him only at a much later date; adding, however, that after Pugin had been domesticated in England for some forty years, 'his French accent and his French idioms were as marked as if he had only recently arrived. If he talked in his sleep,' says his lively pupil, 'he talked in French, and in computing money he always mentally reduced the pounds and shillings into francs before he could ascertain their exact value.'<sup>3</sup> 'In person' Pugin 'was remarkably good-looking, and in manner displayed overwhelming politeness. His foreign shrug and strong accent often astonished the country people with whom he was brought in contact.'<sup>4</sup>

The precise way in which, and time when, Pugin's acquaintance was made with John Nash, the architect of Regent Street, which is said to have led to a twenty years' connexion between them as fellow-workers, is also a little obscure. Ferrey's account is tolerably circumstantial. He says that Pugin's attention was arrested by a newspaper advertisement, intimating that the assistance of a draftsman was required in Nash's office, and that a foreigner would be preferred. Pugin thereupon hastens to the architect's residence, and in the waiting-room comes across a French nobleman, whom he had known in Paris, a candidate for the same appointment. Nash weighs their qualifications, and chooses Pugin.<sup>5</sup> If, however, as he adds, Nash was then 'in the full tide of his prosperity,' and proceeded to employ Pugin on (among other things) drawings of a proposed 'Waterloo Monument'—which could not well have been before the latter part of 1815—they must have been old friends at the time of this engagement. For Mathews speaks of Nash as having been (in times which were 'bygone' in 1819) a 'humble builder of Swansea,' and of Augustus Pugin as one who 'had painted the scenes for the

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, pp. 2-4.

<sup>2</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, p. 42.

<sup>4</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* p. 2

little Welsh theatre.'<sup>1</sup> And Ferrey himself, in another place, gives to the first acquaintance between Pugin and the *elder* Mathews the specific date 1796, when the latter, 'returning from a professional engagement in Ireland, was nearly wrecked on the coast of Wales, and while at Carmarthen fell in with Nash and Pugin,<sup>2</sup> who thus seem to have been already known to one another. Mathews further says that his own father, when, 'somewhere about 1797, a struggling actor on the Welsh circuit, made the acquaintance of Mr. Nash the builder, at Swansea, who was a great patron of the theatre and occasionally indulged in amateur performances himself.'<sup>3</sup> And he tells us that Pugin, 'having become a great favourite of and of much use to Mr. Nash, ultimately accompanied his patron to London, and soon became the founder of a school of his own creation, and one much needed and highly patronized.'<sup>4</sup> But this independent position had not yet been attained. In 1807 Pugin had barely crossed the threshold of his career. He seems already to have been collecting materials for architectural publications, with which his name is chiefly associated. To improve such practical knowledge of art as he had acquired in his native country, he had become a student of the Royal Academy, and, according to Ferrey, was the companion of Hilton and of Shee.<sup>5</sup> He also put himself under the tuition of an aquatint engraver called Merigot, probably a refugee like himself, whom he found living in London, and who had formerly been a drawing master in his father's family. In the Academy catalogues his name first appears in 1799, more as that of an architect than a picturesque draftsman, with a 'Design of an intended Villa in the North of England.' The next year he has a 'View of Belvidere House, Lambeth;' but nothing more till 1804, when he enters his proper field with a view of Westminster Abbey. In 1805 and 1806 he has, each year, three architectural subjects, four of them from

<sup>1</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, i. 38. In Dr. Percy's collection were 'Two Studies for Operatic Scenes,' by A. Pugin.

<sup>2</sup> *Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* The three acted together in the 'School for Scandal,' Nash being Sir Peter Teazle. Mathews (the younger) had a playbill naming him for the part, and had heard that he performed it admirably. Ferrey also mentions such a playbill (*ubi supra*.) He says that Nash had patrons in Wales and acquired property there; and, being fond of theatrical representations, built a private theatre, in which Mathews, Pugin and other friends acted for their own amusement, sometimes inviting the surrounding gentry to witness their performances. (*Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 14.)

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* p. 40.

<sup>5</sup> It is again difficult to reconcile dates. Shee entered the schools in 1790, and Hilton in 1806 (*Sandby's History of the Royal Academy*), being a contemporary of De Wint's.

Oxford. In 1807 he exhibits instead at the Water-Colour Society, beginning with an 'Interior of St. Paul's.'

Of the many books of architectural illustration for which, during a quarter of a century from this time, he was constantly engaged in making drawings, and of the important part which he played in the revival of a taste for the Gothic style, mention will be made in due time. In the name of his son, A. N. Welby Pugin, the Gothic architect, that on Pugin is known to many who are not aware how excellent an artist the father was in his own department of architectural drawing. It is as a water-colour draftsman that he here claims our notice. Some of the designs which he executed for Nash on a large scale were in body colour.<sup>1</sup> But these are exceptional. Mathews tells us that he produced his effects by the most simple means, confining himself literally to the use of three colours, indigo, light red, and yellow ochre. 'It would,' he justly adds, 'puzzle some of our modern water-colour painters to find themselves thus limited.'<sup>2</sup> This particular combination we now know to be unsafe as regards permanence; but at the time they were painted, Pugin's drawings were admired for their colour, as they still deserve to be for their form and chiaroscuro. 'Architects,' says Mathews, 'flew to him to have their plans and elevations put into correct perspective, and surrounded with the well-executed and appropriate landscapes Pugin was so skilful in producing.'<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey.

<sup>2</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, i. 42.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 39, 40.



## CHAPTER II

## IN PALL MALL AND BOND STREET, 1807, 1808.

The old Royal Academy's rooms—Third Exhibition (1807)—Royal sentries—Continued success—*Nattes* expelled—His subsequent career—Glover, President—Heaphy and Chalon Members—*Freebairn* dies—Posthumous exhibits—Biographies of new Associates—*J. A. Atkinson*—Studies in Russia—Published works—*William Turner*—Of Oxford—Early drawings—Fourth Exhibition (1808)—Bond Street rooms—A rival society—*The Associated Artists*—Its founding and constitution—Leading Members—Turner and Atkinson, Members of The Water-Colour Society—Reinagle, President—*Delamotte* retires—His subsequent career.

WHILE the Society was thus securing good recruits, active preparation was being made for its next exhibition, and the shifting of its quarters to Pall Mall. The old rooms of the Royal Academy, at No. 118 Pall Mall, which had at length been engaged for the purpose, were situate on the south side of the street, a little to the eastward of, or partly overlapping, the site of the United Service Club. The building adjoined old Carlton House, which stood back, behind an imposing colonnade on the now open space between that club and the Athenæum. The galleries belonged to Mr. Christie, the auctioneer, and had been used as the sale rooms of that celebrated firm at least as late as 1804, previously to its removal to a house further to the west in Pall Mall, near to the War Office, adjoining Schomberg House. James Christie, the founder of the business, died in 1802. It was his son, James the second, who succeeded him, that let the rooms to the Water-Colour Society. There are several drawings in the Crace Collection at the British Museum, showing the street front of the old Royal Academy; and a cut of it in Mr. Sandby's book. That writer further refers to a view of the interior in 1771, painted by Brondoin, and mezzotinted by Earlom, representing a small room, apparently some thirty feet long, with a central raised skylight, which was seen from the outside.<sup>1</sup> Here the third exhibition opened on the 27th of April, 1807, and it remained open until the 13th of June.

<sup>1</sup> Sandby's *History of the Royal Academy*, i. 125, 131.

Gilpin, still a Member, though no longer in office, did not withdraw his goodwill from the Society, but used his interest to give *éclat* to the occasion by procuring for it the distinction of sentries from the King's Guard to stand in the passage that led to the gallery. The previous success was more than repeated; 14,366 shillings were taken for admission at the door, beside the moneys for catalogues; and 471*l.* 7*s.* 10½*d.* was the sum divided; Glover coming in for the biggest share, 88*l.* 6*s.* 3*d.* Two rooms were open, hung with 324 drawings, about half in each. The general character of the show resembled that of its predecessors; except that there were now no portraits; that 'Warwick' Smith, now a full Member, exhibited nineteen works, chiefly subjects of Italian landscape and ancient remains; and that rustic figures by Heaphy, and Pugin's one architectural drawing, were among the Associates' contributions.

One element of a foreign nature had, however, been inadvertently admitted into the miscellany, which the Society was not slow to repudiate. On the 17th of June, four days after the close of the exhibition, a meeting was called, to adjudicate upon a serious charge against one of the original members, *Claude Nattes*. It was to the effect that a great part of the drawings sent by him as his own productions were the work of other persons, and had been exhibited in contravention of the Society's express rule that the works of outsiders were not admissible, and with a dishonourable intention of obtaining a larger dividend out of the profits than the exhibitor's own works would have entitled him to. On this charge Nattes was found guilty, and the meeting, bearing in mind the declaration laid down when the Society was founded, that its members were to be not only of 'professional reputation' but 'moral character,' passed an immediate sentence of expulsion. Thus the first member who left the Society retired in disgrace. Nattes again resorted to Somerset House for exhibition. His name appears in the Academy catalogues till 1814, and then is seen no more.

At the anniversary meeting, on the 30th of November, Glover was elected President, in the place of Wells, who resigned that office; and Heaphy and Chalon were raised to the rank of Members.

The year 1808 had not long opened, when another loss occurred by the death of the Associate *Robert Freebairn*, on the 23rd of January. It was in relation to this event that a rule was made, allowing the family of a deceased Member or Associate to exhibit works

prepared by him for the gallery. Freebairn's widow, however, did not avail herself of the permission so given to her. He had exhibited only eight drawings during the two years of his Associateship, nearly all views in Italy, about Tivoli or Rome.

The Society's numbers were soon replenished by the election, on the 29th of January, 1808, of two new Associates: *John Augustus Atkinson*, and *William Turner*.

JOHN AUGUSTUS ATKINSON, besides being an oil painter, was a spirited and powerful sketcher of figures and figure groups, with pen and brush, in the line and wash manner so admirably adapted to reproduction by etching and aquatint engraving. 'His light touch,' says Séguier, 'appears to put everything in motion.'<sup>1</sup> Born in London in 1775 (the birth-year of Turner, Girtin, Heaphy, and Reinagle), he had gone to Russia when nine years old, and been patronised by the Empress Catherine, and also by the Emperor Paul after her death in 1796. He had studied in the gallery at St. Petersburg, and there are two pictures by him of subjects from Russian history in the Michael's Palace. A Russian edition of *Hudibras*, published in 1798 at Königsberg, is mentioned as illustrated by him.<sup>2</sup> In the year of Paul's assassination, 1801, Atkinson came home with sketch-books full of sketches of costumes, and memoranda of social habits and military scenes, which supplied him with much of the material for the works whereby he became known in his own country.

In 1803-4 he brought out, in conjunction with one James Walker (no relation to William), who had gone to St. Petersburg in the same year to be engraver to the Empress, and returned at about the same time, *A Picturesque Representation of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements of the Russians*, in 100 coloured plates, which (in an edition dated 1812) fill three folio volumes. Another publication in the same style, called *A Picturesque Representation of the Naval, Military, and Miscellaneous Costumes of Great Britain*, was now in course of publication. Volume I., published 1807, contains 50, the complete work 100, coloured plates.

In the same year he had produced a series of sixteen coloured engravings,<sup>3</sup> to illustrate separately, or bind up with, the two volumes

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary* (1810).

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>3</sup> Published by Miller in Albemarle Street.



of Beresford's amusing book, *The Miseries of Human Life*. They are etched in soft-ground, and the shadows aquatinted; and in their graceful composition, freedom of touch, and delicacy of colour, they bear some resemblance to the best designs of Rowlandson, without his coarseness. There is also a folding frontispiece, so etched, by him and coloured, to an edition of *Stultifera Navis*, 8vo, 1807. Since 1803 he had exhibited from three to six works a year at the Royal Academy; comprising scenes from classic history, modern military subjects, and picturesque groups.

WILLIAM TURNER, it need scarcely be said, was not the great painter of that name. He is usually, by way of distinction, called 'Turner of Oxford,' having been born (at Blackbourton) in that county on the 12th of November, 1789; and having resided (near Woodstock) in the same county during the greater part of his life. He was as yet a very young landscape painter, and had just completed a term of apprenticeship to John Varley, being one of the earliest of a series of pupils whom that artist had begun to receive into his house for training as artists. He is chiefly remembered in the gallery by his later drawings, generally extensive views, very painstaking and conscientious, but of a realistic kind, and wanting in interest as works of art. But his early drawings possess a certain grandeur and a breadth of composition, obviously the result of the good training he had thus received. In three of the drawings<sup>1</sup> which the young artist exhibited on joining the Society, John Landseer finds the 'wide range of capacity and contrivance, of a veteran landscape painter to whom nature has become familiar;' adding, more specifically: 'By the dint of his superior art he has rolled such clouds over these landscapes as has given to a flat country an equal grandeur with mountain scenery, while they fully account for the striking and natural effects of light and shade which he has introduced. His colouring' adds the critic, 'is grave, subdued, and such as properly belongs to landscapes of a majestic character.'<sup>2</sup>

For the exhibition of 1808, the Society had again to shift their quarters, the old Academy rooms being reported by their surveyor to be in a dangerous condition, and unfit for further use. After some

<sup>1</sup> 'Cornfield near Woodstock,' 'Ottmoor, near Oxford,' and 'Whichwood Forest, Oxfordshire' (exhibited 1808, 1809).

<sup>2</sup> *The Review of Publications in Art* (1808), p. 288.

inquiry as to the cost of building a gallery, although the Society had no funds for that purpose, the Committee engaged for that season, at the rent of 400 guineas, two large rooms belonging to a Mr. Oakley, at No. 16 Old Bond Street, opposite Stafford Street; and there the fourth exhibition was held. The aspect of the gallery at that time has been preserved to us in a view taken of it by Pugin with the Committee's sanction. It is enlivened with figures by Rowlandson, and forms one of a published series of coloured aquatints, commenced this year and continued till 1810, by these two artists, under the title *Microcosm of London*. The number of the house, for a wonder, is unchanged, and it now contains a lofty, well-proportioned show-room, the length of which is at right angles to the street. This may have been, formerly, the 'two large rooms' so used.

The plate above referred to is numbered 34 in the series, and entitled 'Exhibition of Water-colour Drawings in Old Bond Street,' with the imprint 'London, Pub. 1st Sept<sup>r</sup> 1808 at R. Ackermann's Repository of Arts, 101 Strand.' 'Rowlandson et Pugin del<sup>t</sup> et sculp<sup>t</sup>.—Stadler Aquat.' It is accompanied by a short account of the origin and constitution of the Society, and to this is appended a notice of the inauguration of a second water-colour exhibition which had sprung into existence in the same season. As many mistakes have arisen from a confusion between this short-lived rival institution and the Society whereof the annals are here being traced, as accurate a synopsis of its history will be included in this volume as can be obtained from the rather scanty records which still survive.

The movement which gave rise to this new institution has its counterpart in the formation of more than one body established in modern times with a similar object. So far, the progress of the original Society had continued without let or hindrance, and the obvious advantages of belonging to it could not fail to excite emulation, and probably some envy, among those in the profession who were left outside the charmed circle. To these, the exclusive nature of the constitution, under which its walls were reserved entirely for Members and Associates, appeared to leave room for another exhibition, still confined to water-colour drawings, but on a more enlarged plan, and practically open to all members of the profession. It was thought, moreover, that a society formed on a more comprehensive scale would ensure a variety the want of which was perceptible in the existing exhibition, notwithstanding its acknowledged merit. This feeling

took organic shape at a meeting, which was held on Wednesday the 24th of June, 1807, at the Thatched House Tavern (one William Wood, a miniature painter, occupying the chair) and resulted in the following list of names being drawn up as those of the first members of a new association with the above objects :—

William James Bennett	W. J. Thompson
Henry Pierce Bone	William Walker
James Green	Walter H. Watts
J. Huet-Villiers	H. W. Williams
J. Laporte	William Wood
Andrew Robertson	

At a second or adjourned meeting, held on the 1st of July, it was resolved that the Society should be confined to proficient artists in water-colours *or chalks*, and it seems to have been at this time intended to make a direct attack upon the status of the existing body, by the assumption, without qualification, of the same title that it had chosen, '*The Society of Painters in Water-Colours.*' It is probable that this assumption has been at the root of some of the confusion above mentioned as existing between the two Societies. But the title was soon modified, and abandoned. First it was changed to '*The New Society of Painters in Miniature and Water-Colours*;' and then, on the 14th of January, 1808, a resolution was passed: 'That the temporary title of the Society be discontinued, and the following adopted in its room: ASSOCIATED ARTISTS IN WATER-COLOURS.' Another source of confusion lies in the fact that the 'Associated Artists' came into visible being at the very same place as the original Society. They, too, held their first exhibition at Mr. Tresham's rooms, No. 20 Lower Brook Street, and they also afterwards removed to Bond Street, occupying there, for at least three years, the Society's former quarters at No. 16.

Except that the number of members was to be without limit, and was to be increased from time to time by the addition of those among the exhibitors whose works should be most conspicuous, the laws of the new Society were for the most part similar to those of the old. A higher tribute was however paid to the capacity of its lady-members, who were held entitled to vote on all occasions with the lords of the creation.

The first exhibition was opened on the 25th of April, 1808. The



number of exhibited works was 273, among which miniatures played an important part.

There were then eighteen members; and to these were added another eighteen as 'fellow-exhibitors.' The following are the two lists, as given in the catalogue.

## MEMBERS.

William Wood, <i>President</i>	Samuel Owen
James Green, <i>Treasurer</i>	John Papworth
Andrew Robertson, <i>Secretary</i>	Miss Emma Smith
William James Bennett <sup>1</sup>	William John Thomson
Henry P. Bone	William Walker, <i>junior</i> <sup>1</sup>
Alfred Chalon	Walter Henry Watts
Mrs. Green	William Westall <sup>1</sup>
J. Huet-Villiers	H. W. Williams <sup>2</sup>
John Laporte	Andrew Wilson

## EXHIBITORS.

W. Annis	J. Holmes <sup>1</sup>
Tho. Baxter	J. Leschallas
R. Dagley	Fred. Nash <sup>1</sup>
P. Dewint <sup>1</sup>	Wm. Pearson
Geo. Dinsdale	Jos. Powell
L. Francia	J. C. Schetky
Miss Gartside	J. Clarendon Smith
E. Goodwin	D. Thompson
J. Hewlett	C. Turner

Among the above names will be recognized those of some artists with whom we have already made acquaintance. Among them are *Alfred E. Chalon* (John's more distinguished brother), and the drawing master *Laporte*. There is also *Louis Francia*, whose career has been sketched in connexion with Girtin's. *Samuel Owen* was another sea-painter in whose works may be recognized the same fine feeling for composition that was displayed by the master just named: and *John Christian Schekty* was an eminent and loving depicter of the

<sup>1</sup> These were all in after times Members or Associates of the Water-Colour Society.

<sup>2</sup> Hugh William Williams (born 1773, died 1829), known as 'Grecian Williams,' and afterwards in much repute in Edinburgh, was an unsuccessful candidate for the Water-Colour Society in 1807. (Redgrave's *Dictionary of Artists*.)

wooden walls of England.<sup>1</sup> *Henry P. Bone* (afterwards Court enamel-painter, as his father, Henry Bone, R.A., was before him) and *John Buonarotti Papworth* (architect and ornamental draftsman) are other well-known names in the list of members; and of some of the remainder much will be said in future chapters.

An advertisement, of which the following is the material part, was prefixed to the catalogue: 'The members of this Society think it proper to state, that in forming the present exhibition they were not influenced by any sentiment of hostility or opposition to the society which originated a few years ago under a similar appellation. The rapid advance which this class of art had made, its powers of reaching greater excellence, if judiciously employed, and the propriety of separating drawings and pictures in water-colours from the immediate contact of those produced with other materials, were probably the motives for forming that society: the same opinions, the same feelings led to the association of the artists, who now, for the first time as a distinct body, submit their works to public inspection. . . .

'The Society will listen with respectful deference to the public opinion, and repeat or withdraw their pretensions accordingly.'

A contemporary writer, favourable to the new scheme, declares that in its first year the Associated Artists 'met with encouragement similar to that which the prior establishment had experienced.'<sup>2</sup> It did not however last more than five years. But, during that period, the exhibitors, of one class or the other, included a few artists of considerable note, and some who afterwards became members of the Water-Colour Society.

Meanwhile the old Society, though moving from place to place, was in other respects making satisfactory progress. The number of admissions on payment in 1808 was one less than 19,000, and the profit divided more than 445*l*. At the anniversary meeting of the 30th of November, *Turner* and *Atkinson* were made full Members; and, on the resignation of *Glover*, *Reinagle* was elected President for the ensuing year.

Four drawings in 1808 were the last which the Society received

<sup>1</sup> Both these marine painters lived to a great age. Owen died in December 1857, in his ninetieth year, having long ceased to practise his art (*Redgrave's Dictionary*); and Schetky lived till his ninety-sixth year, dying in 1874 (see *Ninety Years of Work and Play, a Life of J. C. Schetky*, by his daughter).

<sup>2</sup> *Microcosm of London*, ii.

from the hand of WILLIAM DELAMOTTE. He had contributed in all only eleven, and been but three years an Associate, never rising to the rank of Member. His subjects, after the first, were views on or near the Thames at Marlow &c., with two or three drawings from his Paris sketches in 1802. He continued his practice as landscape artist and teacher of drawing for many years after. On the reopening of the Continent to English travellers he was able to replenish his portfolio with foreign subjects. Some views in Belgium dated 1819 are among his drawings at South Kensington. Graves finds seventy-three works by him recorded in the catalogues of the Royal Academy, British Institution, and Suffolk Street exhibitions, between 1793 and 1850.

A drawing of 'Christ Church Oxford, from Hinksey Meadows' ( $20\frac{1}{4} \times 29\frac{1}{8}$  in.), on wire-wove paper, in the South Kensington Museum, justifies the description given by Redgrave<sup>1</sup> of the artist's early works as being 'in the manner of Girtin.' 'Later,' adds the same writer, 'his landscapes were chiefly drawn with the pen and tinted, and were peculiar in style.' He lived to old age, dying on the 13th of February, 1863, at St. Giles's, near Oxford.

The following prints in *The Beauties of England and Wales* are from Delamotte's drawings: 'Oxford, from Ferry Hinksey,' 1804; 'View in Dovedale,' 1805; 'Tetbury' (from a sketch by Prout), 1807; 'Matlock Bath,' 1809. He published *Thirty Etchings of Rural Subjects* in 1816. *Illustrations of Virginia Water*, lithographed by W. Gauci, impl. 4to, 1828; and *Original Views of Oxford*, coloured lithographs, impl. folio, 1843, bear the name of 'W. A. Delamotte.'

There are other artists of the same surname. A brother, who signed himself 'George O. de la Motte,' was also a landscape painter; and a son, Philip Henry Delamotte, practised as a photographer as well as a draftsman, and published many views, and some technical treatises. The latter died at Bromley in Kent on the 24th of February, 1889. There are moreover some works on ornament by F. or F. G. Delamotte, probably of the same family.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of the English School.*



## CHAPTER III

## AT SPRING GARDENS, 1809 to 1812

At Wigley's Rooms—Exhibition of 1809—Testimonials—Changes to 1812—*Shelley* dies—Final biography—Death of *Paul Sandby*—Final biographies of retiring members—*W. H. Pyne*—*Heaphy*—Biographies of new Members and Associates—*Thomas Uwins*—*William Payne*—*Edmund Dorrell*—*Charles Wild*—*Frederick Nash*—*Peter De Wint*—*Copley Fielding*—*William Westall*.

THE Society enjoyed no rest, however, in their new quarters. They were unable to obtain the rooms from Mr. Oakley for the ensuing season, and being again cast adrift, they finally came ashore in Spring Gardens at the historic site of many an old exhibition; where the Incorporated Society of Artists had held their shows for a long series of years; where Girtin had spread his view of London; and where, more recently, under the name of 'Wigley's Rooms,' a variety of miscellaneous sights had been offered to view. These rooms were in the last house on the right hand, adjoining the iron gateway from Spring Gardens into the Mall, there being then no building beyond, on the site now occupied by the offices of the London County Council. From this Mr. Wigley they hired the gallery, on a lease, at 200*l.* for three months in each of the next fourteen years; and from 1809 to 1820 the exhibitions which form the main subject of this chronicle were held, as the catalogues have it, 'at the Great Rooms, Spring Gardens.' Exhibition galleries were usually called 'great rooms' in those days. That at Spring Gardens was in size 58 by 44 feet.

The Exhibition of 1809 was the most successful of any which the Society had yet held. The number of drawings amounted to 341; and a surplus of 626*l.* was divided among the members, whose feelings of satisfaction with the state of things and with one another found vent in testimonials of a substantial kind. The Secretary and Treasurer had already been voted an annual 50*l.* each out of the profits; in addition to which, a presentation of plate of the value of 100 guineas was made by general subscription to Robert Hills, 'as a token of respect and gratitude for his unremitting services since the

establishment of the Society in 1804.' Hills, however, gracefully declining to accept both *honoraria* at the same time, the amount of his 50*l.* salary was, at his suggestion, employed in providing a similar testimonial to R. R. Reinagle, the treasurer. Both presentations took place at the anniversary meeting in November.

Within the period now commencing, although the local habitation remained the same, important changes were to take place in the constitution of the Society, as well as in the group of artists of which it was composed. Until 1812, an epoch to be borne in mind, when an absolute revolution took place which will presently be described, these changes were chiefly of the latter kind. In the course of the four years 1809 to 1812 the following fresh dozen of artists joined the Society as Associates :—

Thomas Uwins	}	. . . . .	elected 15 Feb. 1809
William Payne			
Edmund Dorrell			
Charles Wild			
Frederick Nash . . . . .	}	. . . . .	,, 22 Jan. 1810
Peter De Wint . . . . .			
Anthony Vandyke Copley Fielding			
William Westall . . . . .			,, 11 June, 1810
William Scott . . . . .			,, 30 Nov. 1810
David Cox	}	. . . . .	,, 8 June, 1812
Luke Clennell			
C. Barber			

On 12 June, 1809, *Stevens* and *Dorrell*; on 11 June, 1810, *Nash* and *Uwins*; on 10 June, 1811, *De Wint* and *Westall*; and 8 June, 1812, *Wild* and *Pugin*, were taken from the list of Associates and made into full Members; the limit of number being, on the 29th of November, 1810, extended from twenty-four to thirty, though in point of fact it never exceeded twenty-five. In the Presidential chair—which had been filled from Nov. 1804 to March 1806 by Gilpin, from that time till Nov. 1807 by Wells, and then till Nov. 1808 by Glover—Reinagle sat from Nov. 1808 to the end of the term. The post of Treasurer was held by Shelley from Nov. 1804 to March 1807; by Reinagle from that time to Nov. 1808; and by Rigaud to the end of the term. During the whole period the duties of Secretary were performed by Hills.

Besides the expulsion of Nattes, the Society had, on the other hand, been weakened in numbers by several desertions, and by one death. The catalogue of 1808 is the last which contains the name of SAMUEL SHELLEY. Redgrave tells us that he died at his house in George Street on the 22nd of December, 1808, at the age of fifty-eight.<sup>1</sup> He had continued to adorn the walls of the galleries in Pall Mall and Bond Street with ideal studies and pleasing fancies inspired by Tasso and other poets, and in this last year again placed some professed portraits among the drawings he exhibited, notwithstanding their exclusion from a share of profits. But his works had no place in the series of exhibitions at Spring Gardens. His total number of drawings in the Society's gallery amounted to sixty-three. Shelley made some designs for book illustrations, and there are prints after him by Bartolozzi, Caroline Watson, Nattes, Collier, Heath, Engleheart, Sherwin, Burke, and Knight. It is stated that of some of his works he was his own engraver. A pencil sketch by him of himself and his sister, purchased at Sotheby and Co.'s in November 1884, is in the writer's possession.

Another noted life came to an end in the first year of the Spring Gardens exhibition. Old *Paul Sandby* was gathered to his fathers at the age of eighty-three in the late autumn of 1809. With him died out the prior generation of the water-colour school of which he had been in many respects the father. He had now survived his brethren and many of his artist progeny, and had even in his own practice somewhat outlived the method of art more peculiarly his own. The tree drawings he made in Windsor Park when more than seventy had chiefly been executed in distemper. He expired peacefully, with faculties unimpaired, at his house in St. George's Row. The place where his body rests (on the eastern side of the cemetery behind, close to the path) is marked by a flat stone slab, plainly supported by a few rows of bricks, and inscribed in very large letters with the simple words—

PAUL SANDBY, R.A.

OBIIT NOVEMBER

7<sup>TH</sup> 1809.

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of English School.* But the facts, first that Nagler gives the date 1810, and secondly, that a certain 'Dowager Lady Shelley' died, according to the *Annual Register* (which does not mention Samuel), on this 22 Dec. 1808, combine to raise a suspicion of error.



Sandby's death occurred just seven years, less two days, after that of his bright young neighbour, Thomas Girtin.

The name of another of its founders passes out of the Society's records during the period of removal from Bond Street to Spring Gardens.<sup>1</sup> On the 11th of January, 1809, WILLIAM HENRY PYNE, the zealous promoter of its formation, chose to exemplify the alleged fickleness of his disposition by resigning his membership, and devoting himself to pursuits still connected with art, but in which the work of the pen encroached on, and gradually superseded, that of the pencil. His contributions to the annual show, fifty-four in all, though ably executed, had been of minor attraction. Latterly, cottages are his favourite subjects. He had not, however, been idle in work for the press, and a series of books of small figures, chiefly designed for the use of students and landscape draftsmen, whereof the *Microcosm*, already mentioned, was the first, are the productions on which the reputation of his pencil chiefly rests. The following works were afterwards published by him in succession, viz.—‘*The Costume of Great Britain*, designed engraved and written by W. H. Pyne,’ imp. 4to, Miller, Albemarle Street, 1808. It contains sixty coloured aquatints, a single figure or group only on each plate, the dresses being those of various degrees, from a dustman to a peer of the realm. It is the seventh volume of a series of works on costume, the others being of China, Turkey, Russia, and Austria.—‘*W. H. Pyne on Rustic Figures in Imitation of Chalk*,’ 4to, Ackermann. In the preface the author draws a contrast between the study of drawing the ‘classic or elegant’ and the ‘rustic’ figure, the former being characterized by flowing lines and studied folds of drapery conforming to the limbs, the latter demanding more abrupt lines, and the draperies, of coarser stuff, giving no indication of the wearer’s shape. And he announces that, ‘to facilitate the study of rustic figures,’ he ‘has modelled a number of characters selected from the English peasantry, on a scale of 8 inches in height, from which plaster casts are taken, for the purpose of assisting young persons in acquiring the art of grouping, and to improve them in the study of light and shadow.’ These were to be had at Ackermann’s, the publisher. The thirty-six plates in this work appear to be soft-ground etchings,

<sup>1</sup> On one subsequent occasion, namely in 1815, Pyne contributed two works to the Spring Gardens gallery, but not as a member of the Society.

helped with the roulette, chiefly single figures for drawing copies, in the 'slight manner' recommended. They are dated 1813, though the title-page (of one edition at least) has the date 1817.—‘*Etchings of Rustic Figures for the Embellishment of Landscape*. By W. H. Pyne, Author of the “Microcosm of Arts,” &c.,’ imp. 8vo, M. A. Nattali, 23 Bedford Street, Covent Garden. This work contains sixty plates of figures and groups, boats, carts, &c., pure hard-ground etchings. They are dated 1814 and 1815. An edition was published in 1819.

As a practical artist he did little more, though he continued to labour in the cause of art till a late period of his life as a writer and conductor of works for the press. In 1819 was also published an elaborate work in three royal quarto volumes: ‘*The History of the Royal Residences of Windsor Castle, St. James’s Palace, Carlton House, Kensington Palace, Hampton Court, Buckingham House, and Frogmore*.’ It was illustrated by one hundred coloured aquatints, to which Pyne supplied the letterpress, and a strong group of members of the Water-Colour Society<sup>1</sup> provided the illustrations. Though the author was in this case his own publisher, the book belongs to the same group as a series of works which emanated from Ackermann’s firm during the first quarter of the century, and in the projection whereof Pyne is said to have borne a considerable share.<sup>2</sup> They will be referred to more fully by-and-by. The following letter to his friend Jerdan, the editor of the *Literary Gazette*, referring to the progress of this work, is characteristic of the writer: ‘My dear Sir,—I have sent some account of Windsor, which I request you to read over *carefully*. I have marked the quotations all the way. Please make what alterations you may think necessary in the prologue, which is vastly modest. I had written something for Hampton Court, but determined yesterday afternoon to *begin* with the beginning. So all that I had gotten for the *Literary Gazette* will do for another occasion. I much wish to see you, but am so incessantly engaged, being on the very point of finishing my work, that I must postpone that pleasure for two or three days. I have written out some sheets of my CROOKED TELESCOPE, which I am Jack ass enough to

<sup>1</sup> Wild, Westall, Pugin, Mackenzie, Nash, and Stephanoff, were among the draftsmen employed.

<sup>2</sup> There is a plate after W. H. Pyne in Ackermann’s *History of the University of Cambridge*, 1815.

think very witty and very pithy and very original, and, in short, what you cannot attack in INK POT MALICE.

‘Yours very faithfully,

‘W. H. PYNE.

‘July 22, 1819.

‘In great great haste.

‘J. JERDAN, Esq., Upper Queen’s Buildings, Brompton.’

This particular work turned out to be a disastrous speculation, and involved him in difficulties which he was never able to overcome.<sup>1</sup> He afterwards employed his pen chiefly as a journalist and critical writer on art. As a gossiping historian of the earlier days of the British school, he handed down to later generations, though in a desultory fashion, a valuable record, derived from the experience of his youth and the current hearsay of his older companions. Adopting the *nom de plume* ‘Ephraim Hardcastle’ (citizen and drysalter), he wrote a series of papers in the *Literary Gazette*, which were afterwards collected into two octavo volumes, and published by Longman and Co., in 1823, under the title *Wine and Walnuts*. Then came the ‘*Somerset House Gazette*; Weekly Miscellany of Fine Arts, Antiquities, and Literary Chit-chat,’ the first number of which was dated 11 October, 1823. In it was absorbed in the following February an existing paper called the ‘*Literary Museum*,’ and it came out weekly under a joint title until No. 52, dated 2nd October, 1824. A continuation was announced, but is not known to have been ever issued, and the year’s work now fills the two small-quarto volumes which there has been such frequent occasion to quote in these pages. It was published by William Wetton in Fleet Street, opposite St. Dunstan’s Church. Pyne, who edited and probably wrote most of the work, already announces himself in the first number as one of the ‘*virtuosi greybeards*.’ He was then fifty-four, and he lived twenty years longer, contributing to other publications which followed, namely, Arnold’s ‘*Library of the Fine Arts*’ and ‘*Magazine of the Fine Arts*,’ and ‘*Fraser’s Magazine*.’<sup>2</sup> In 1825 he published his last entire book, ‘*The Twenty-ninth of May*; Rare Doings at the Restoration, by Ephraim Hardcastle,’ 2 vols. 8vo.

<sup>1</sup> He had announced a second series, to be called ‘*Interior Views of the most magnificent Seats of the Nobility and Gentry throughout Great Britain*.’ See Elmes’s *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1816).

<sup>2</sup> ‘*The Greater and Lesser Stars of Old Pall Mall*’ is the title of his last paper in *Fraser*.



Sad to relate, Pyne's 'latter days' were, as his friend John Britton expressed it, 'clouded by misfortune.'<sup>1</sup>

The following letter to 'W. Jerdan Esq., Grove House, Brompton,' bearing the postmark of 7th May, 1828, was written from the King's Bench prison, and speaks for itself: 'My dear Sir,—Our friend Mr. Hunt has written to me thus: "Funds are ready for your relief, and if Forty pounds will extricate you that sum can be had instantan." He further says, "I am to say how and when the issues are to be made" etc. I have written to say that a sum not exceeding five pounds would be immediately most useful, as I have demands upon me here, and the residue will be no less beneficial at home, as I left Mrs. Pyne destitute of means. I have some employment which will, I believe, secure me three pounds per week, so that I trust two pounds weekly from you, my worthy banker, will supply the wants of myself and family. This place, with the most rigid economy, is yet expensive. Fortunately I have obtained a room to myself, in which I am occupied in painting and drawing. Had I not found a *Samaritan* here, in Mr. Hopwood, late a sheriff's officer, I know not what I should have done. He kindly advanced me the needful, and I have repaid him in part. I shall hope to have occasion therefore to draw upon the said fund of 40*l.* only two pounds weekly. This gift, thus spontaneously bestowed through your friendly zeal, I receive with thanks indeed! I feel proud in thus obtaining it, as it leads me to think that in the extremity of my misfortune I have not lost the esteem of good men, a blessing only to be duly estimated by one circumstanced like myself. The money thus obtained *will* enable me to go through the necessary ordeal to extricate me. I did, on the receipt of Mr. Hunt's letter, employ my attorney to give notice of my taking the benefit of the Insolvent Act, and my notice is signed and delivered. I trust that I shall be liberated within seven weeks. My attorney has engaged, and will give it to you and Mr. Hunt in writing, to do the whole within *fifteen pounds*. He thinks that the sum will not exceed twelve. So that I hope there will remain something at the period of my liberation. Once more then, my dear Jerdan, I thank you, and remain, as ever, Your obliged and faithful servant,

'W. H. PYNE.'

A graphic picture of poor Pyne's condition some half-dozen years

<sup>1</sup> Britton's *Autobiography*, Part II. p. 183.

later, and of his brave struggling against evil fortune, is given in the following long epistle addressed to worthy John Britton at 'Burton Street (or Place), Burton Crescent,' and dated 'October 30, 1835.' The writer is again in the debtors' prison, though he gives as his address '32 Dudley Grove, Paddington.' 'Dear Sir,—I take the liberty to write to you again, in conformity with that I said in my last, and feel assured you will read what I shall pen, with your accustomed kindness. I write without reserve, which I venture to think will be more agreeable to you, than if I were to use compliments and flattery, and therefore beg to observe that it would not surprise me if you were to entertain an opinion that a man of talent with suitable industry and economy might contrive in such an enlightened age as the present to obtain a living, or at least avoid getting into debt. You indeed, and I say it in honest sincerity, are amongst those who might be forgiven for holding such an opinion, because it must be pretty generally known that you have practised these moral virtues, or your condition would not be so favourable as you have yourself expressed it to be—I quote from your own confessions, on reading that sketch of your life which you kindly presented to me.

'I have been both industrious and frugal, and yet at my advanced period of life I have nothing left of that private fortune which ought perhaps, with more foresight than I ever possessed, to have maintained me ; but I entered into speculations which were not sufficiently considered, and the result has been only the experience of varied misfortune. I have indeed exerted my capacity to avert these evils, and have as worthy a wife, and two daughters, in every domestic respect, as ever man was blessed with, and yet we cannot, or at least have not prospered. I trouble you with these statements, lest your own honourable career should lead you to misgivings as to my prudence in the management of the means I have possessed. But should you so have thought, permit me to say, in behalf of myself and family, that we have mixed as little in the gaieties of life as though we were of the persuasion of the Quakers. My daughters, though accomplished women, were never at a public ball ; we have never been at any watering-place, nor at any other [*sic*], excepting two or three concerts. Never together at any play-house. Have faith in me, moreover, though I should desire it not to be made generally known, that from the time of my reverses, namely, the failure of my work on the

Palaces, I have not purchased *one single* bottle of wine—nor owed for one directly or indirectly. I could not afford to drink wine, and I would not go into debt for such a luxury. More than this, not one shilling has been owing by my wife or daughters for dress of any sort or kind; all my expenses have been for the necessities of life in supporting one daughter for many years afflicted with the *tic doloureux*, and another, a widow, and her son (a youth now dead), and the mother engaged with the partners in his late concern in a chancery suit, not having received a shilling from the concern from the time of his death, now more than twelve years. This daughter has contributed to our means by going out as a governess, and the house which I hold on lease at Dudley Grove, the property of a worthy friend, was taken under the hope of my two daughters being enabled to establish a day school for young ladies, and we hope, and indeed expect it will succeed. Now my Dear Sir, the drift of these explanations is, to endeavour to shew to you the rectitude of our little family compact, as the best, and only warrantry I can bring before you, for again asking you to use your kind offices in my behalf, knowing, or hearing at least that there is to be a meeting of the worthy gentlemen who compose the Committee of the Benevolent Literary Fund Society, when I venture to solicit a renewal of your benevolent exertions in my behalf.

‘I have lost too much time of late in preparing two works. Indeed I have bestowed nearly fourteen months upon them; the one a plan for teaching the polite arts and sciences by the aid of woodcuts—the other, an illustration of the Holy Bible. I have submitted each to Messrs. Longman and to others, who have expressed their approval of their originality but decline engaging to take them—entirely in consequence of the probable out-lay for so extensive a number of blocks. Thus I have been diligent as it were, in doing of nothing. I hope, however, that the work which I am now upon—I mean the *graphic* Wine and Walnuts, will be successful; all without exception who I have made acquainted with the plan, urge me to proceed, upon their opinion that it will meet with very extensive support. It has pleased God to bless me with health, and as I believe I said before, my mental en[ergies] are not at all diminished, and I hope very soon to commence upon the etching of two plates as specimens. I shall adopt your advice, and publish them as *facsimiles* three plates for one guinea, and the twelve celebrated clubs to make a volume,



with letter-press historically descriptive of each. My only anxiety is to procure some little funds to enable me to begin ; and I have the courage to believe that, once set a going, I shall obtain a good subscription. The worst of my tale is yet untold—for I am at this moment a prisoner in the King's Bench ; although to alleviate my sorrow I have a room to myself and, by the goodness of the Marshal, such facilities, as will enable me to proceed with my studies undisturbed. I remain, Dear Sir, your obliged friend and servant,

‘ W. H. PYNE.

‘ To J. Britton, Esq.’

These sanguine schemes, it need hardly be said, came to naught ; and even the blessing of health, which he so piously acknowledged, was taken from him ; for it is recorded to have been ‘ after a long and depressing illness ’<sup>1</sup> that he died at Paddington, aged seventy-four, on the very anniversary that he had celebrated in his last book, ‘ the 29th of May,’ 1843.

A subscription had been raised for his benefit, to which Britton contributed ; and in his last year (June 1842) a sum of 20*l.* was voted for his relief by the Water-Colour Society, on his daughter's representation that he was ‘ in a state of old age, incapacity, and extreme distress.’

Another member who deserted the Society was THOMAS HEAPHY. He resigned just at the end of the above-mentioned term, namely, on the 10th of February, 1812, after having exhibited from five to thirteen works yearly since his election, making forty in all. They had formed a distinct feature in the exhibitions, and their value stood high in the market.

‘ We have a distinct recollection,’ says Pyne,<sup>2</sup> ‘ of the favourable impression which the works of this artist wrought upon the admirers of water-colour paintings.’<sup>3</sup> . . . For three or four successive seasons, the high prices which were paid for his novel designs were sufficient proofs of public approbation.’ This, however, he regards as ‘ not entirely complimentary to public taste ; for,’ says he, ‘ many of the

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary of the English School*.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 194.

<sup>3</sup> The writer includes the ‘ first opening of the exhibition in Brook Street.’ But here his memory is at fault. Heaphy did not join the Society until they had left their first quarters for Pall Mall.

compositions of his ingenious hand represented scenes in low life which, although depicted with great observance of character and truth of expression, yet, being destitute of that moral point which characterizes the works of the incomparable Hogarth, were disgusting to good feeling and repulsive to delicate sentiment.' But he cites his water-colour drawings of this period as examples of brilliancy and harmony of colouring attainable in that medium.<sup>1</sup>

Heaphy's contempt of 'academic art' was not reciprocated by its professors, at least not by President West, who expressed his great admiration of a 'spirited little composition' by this artist, called 'Boys disputing over their Day's Sport,' which was exhibited in Bond Street in 1808; and the encomium being spread about among the crowd of persons of high rank who were present, his fame was at once established.<sup>2</sup> The next year, 1809, at Spring Gardens his drawing of the 'Fish Market' at Hastings was also highly praised by West, who said of it to Pyne, 'Sir, the subject is so well treated in its way, the expression is so complete, and the colouring and harmony are so pure and so perfect that it leaves one nothing to wish.'<sup>3</sup> This picture has been considered his *chef-d'œuvre*, and it was bought by Mr. Wheeler of Gloucester Place for four or five hundred guineas. The titles of many of his other works, such as 'Robbing a Market Girl,' and its companion, 'Young Gamblers,' 1807; 'Disappointment, or the Lease refused,' 'The Poacher alarmed,' 'Chiding the Favourite,' 'The Lout's Reward,' 1808; 'Family Doctress,' 1809; 'The Proposal,' 'The Mother's Prayer,' 1810; 'Scene round a Fish Tub, Symptoms of a Broomstick Wedding,' 'The Happy Meeting,' 1811; and others, seem to aim at a kind of popularity which one is not apt to associate with the highest appreciation of art. One of the above, the 'Family Doctress,' is possibly the drawing, now at South Kensington, confessedly rechristened 'The Wounded Leg.'

After his success with the 'Hastings Fish Market,' the sale of Heaphy's works for some reason declined, and his pictures remained on his hands. In 1813 he had an exhibition of them at the old Academy Rooms, where the Society had been located in the first year of his Associateship. The result does not seem to have been such as to encourage the composition of more subject-pieces, for he

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 114.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 'Poor West used to overwhelm young men with flattery, and often spoil them.' *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 114.

now turned his attention again more exclusively to portrait-painting, and sought a more promising field of operations. After leaving the Society, he accompanied the British army during the war in the Peninsula, in order to portray the chief officers engaged therein. He was with the troops during most of the operations till the battle of Toulouse, and at the close of the war returned to England and painted a large water-colour picture of the Duke of Wellington and his staff, the engraving from which is well known. In February 1821, he began an issue in numbers, each containing six heads in black and white chalk, of '*Studies from Nature of the British Character*, consisting of soldiers who have fought under the Duke of Wellington, sailors, and rustics.'<sup>1</sup>

He afterwards entered into some building speculations in the then almost uninhabited district of St. John's Wood, and may be said for some years to have nearly relinquished painting. The result was what might have been expected. On resuming the brush, while yet in the prime of life, he exclaimed with grief, 'My power has gone from me.' But he did not abandon art. He was among the originators of the Society of British Artists, was their first president in 1823, and exhibited fourteen works at their gallery in Suffolk Street. In 1831 he joined the 'New Society of Painters in Water-Colours' (now the Royal Institute), and in November 1835 departed this life. In his later time he evinced a higher appreciation of the old masters than he had professed in his youth, by the earnestness and avidity with which he made copies of their works during a visit he then paid to Italy.<sup>2</sup>

A son of his, T. F. Heaphy, practised art as an original painter and as a picture restorer, and was the author of several books.<sup>3</sup>

Thus much for the departed. Among the artists who joined the Society in the latter part of its first period, were one or two whose names are ordinarily used to indicate its golden era. *Cox* and *De Wint*, and *Copley Fielding*, were indeed made Associates before the close of the period, and De Wint was for one year a full Member. But Cox came too late to have any place in this series of exhibitions, and

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*, xi. 128.

<sup>2</sup> In Ackermann's *Repository* for February 1821 is announced '*Studies of Character and Expression from the Old Masters*,' by Heaphy.

<sup>3</sup> There is an account of him and them in Redgrave's *Dictionary* (2nd edit.), and in the *Athenæum*, 13 August, 1881; see also *Notes and Queries*, 6th series, iv. 508.



De Wint and Fielding appear only in three out of four of those held at Spring Gardens during the period in question. The great majority of the Associates elected, as above mentioned, from 1809 to 1812 belong, as before, to the department of landscape, two only being figure-painters, and one of these, *Clennell*, elected (like Cox) too late to exhibit at all. But the names of De Wint and Cox, and Clennell also, were already before the public, for they had all been exhibiting with success in the rival society of the 'Associated Artists.'

The new figure-painter who contributed to our gallery was THOMAS UWINS, who nearly thirty years after became a Royal Academician. When he began to exhibit with the Water-Colour Society, in 1809, he was a man of twenty-seven, known as a graceful designer, at this time chiefly employed (by J. Walker of Paternoster Row, and others) in making designs for book-illustration,<sup>1</sup> of the school that acknowledged the leadership of Stothard; whom he followed without imitating, either in style or treatment. He drew the very pretty faces<sup>2</sup> and figures in the coloured fashion-plates of Ackermann's *Repository*, in which periodical he moreover wrote critical articles. He also copied pictures for engravers,<sup>3</sup> a practice in which many of our best painters in water-colours found profitable employment at a time when line engraving was still held in general esteem as a living art.

Thomas Uwins was the fourth and youngest child of a clerk in the Bank of England, who bore the same name, and lived at Hermes Hill, Pentonville; where this boy, one of three, was born on the 24th of February, 1782. His father's calling, and the classic fitness in the appellation of his own birthplace, may lead one to assume that he too would have been dedicated to the shrine of commerce, had not a capacity for art been found within him on a timely occasion. This discovery was made one day by an Italian refugee, who taught his sister drawing. Miss Uwins was being educated for a teacher of

<sup>1</sup> There is an edition of the works of 'Peter Pindar' in 4 vols. 12mo, 1809, with vignettes by Uwins.

<sup>2</sup> Ackermann, in his German English, called them Uwins's 'britty vaces,' and paid for the tinted drawings at the rate of half a crown apiece. The artist had not only to draw but collect the dresses he depicted. (*Memoir of Uwins*, by his widow, i. 23, 24, 46.)

<sup>3</sup> In or about 1810, he copied in Indian ink, for Charles Warren, Barry's big painting of the 'Grecian Harvest Home' at the Society of Arts, thereby relieving Wilkie, who had undertaken the work, but left it for his own natural domain of art. He also copied in water-colours Hilton's 'Europa' in Sir John Leicester's gallery. (*Ibid.* p. 25.)

young ladies, and flower-painting being considered the most profitable branch for her to study with that object, some 'copies' of another kind which the master had with him when he came to give her a lesson, chanced to fall under her brother's eye. He 'began to look over them, borrowed a pencil, and very quietly set himself to copy the limbs and faces of figures.' The drawing-master, on seeing what the boy had done, was 'greatly surprised,' and told his mother that 'this child ought to have the best instruction, and would most assuredly excel in art.' Tom Uwins was then about nine, and had to be given a general education as well. So he was sent, with his brothers, for six years to Mr. Crole's academy in Queen's Head Lane, Islington. But his mother, who seems (after the nature of artists' mothers) to have been more pleased than his father with the above prophecy, took care to get him some instruction in drawing at the same time, not only in the class there, but from a master on half-holidays. The teacher so employed was honest enough to declare, after six months, that he could teach him nothing more, and would not rob his parents by pretending to do so.

In 1797, when he was fifteen, Uwins was bound apprentice, at a premium of 100 guineas, to an engraver, one Benjamin Smith, living in Judd Place,<sup>1</sup> New Road. Smith, though himself possessed of no great talent, had some good engravers as pupils. Among them were William Holl and Henry Meyer, the former of whom was, in Uwins's time, employed as an assistant, but was in fact the chief instructor. There was also an occasional assistant, called R. Syer, from whom Uwins declared that he 'learned more of art than from any other person.' Smith was then doing work, or getting it done, for Alderman Boydell, and there is a plate, in the Shakspeare series, of 'Richard surrendering his Crown to Bolingbroke,' after Mather Brown, which (having been begun by a friend and fellow-pupil, R. C. Roffe) was finished by Uwins. But he disliked this kind of work, and, worrying himself over it into an attack of jaundice, had to be released after one year's servitude; when he exchanged the burin for the brush.

While at Smith's, he had diligently practised his drawing after the daily ten hours of drudgery there were over, and would even employ his pencil at tea-time in sketching the cups and saucers. It is possible that now, when enabled to devote himself to congenial

<sup>1</sup> The number was 21, afterwards changed to 74.

branches of art, he became one of Simpson's pupils at the school in Finsbury, where Heaphy received instruction.<sup>1</sup> Like his alleged fellow-pupil, he too became afterwards (in 1798) a student at the Royal Academy. And now again the careers of the two artists were to run parallel for a short period in the annals of the Water-Colour Society, where Heaphy was Uwins's proposer as an Associate.

While at the Academy, Uwins attended Sir Charles Bell's anatomical class, and his drawings of the muscles were much praised for their truthfulness by that eminent surgeon, himself an excellent artist. He had begun also to try his hand at likenesses in water-colours when he was quite a boy, and is said to have 'supported himself by miniature portraits and by teaching before he was twenty.' But his chief delight was found in original design.

During the four years 1809-1812, Uwins exhibited at the Water-Colour Society forty-three separate drawings (seven of them being small ones, grouped together, more than one in a frame). Eight, in 1811, represented scenes from Shakspeare. Others were illustrations of Fielding, Sterne, &c. Rural industries of his time and country, hop and fruit pickers, plaiters, gleaners, and the like, supplied him with picturesque figure studies and groups, that made up nearly all the rest of his contributions. In treating subjects of the latter class he showed a refinement which in some measure associates his work with, but does not make it resemble, that of Cristall, who was beginning to cultivate a like field, in a spirit more severely classical.

The name of one of the remaining landscape painters, WILLIAM PAYNE, recalls an earlier age of the present history. He is known to the reader as one of the improvers of water-colour drawing, who helped to adapt it to a wider range of landscape than had come within the scope of the old topographers, and as a very fashionable teacher of showy ways of handling the brush, and contrasting bright colours with the tempering aid of his favourite 'grey.' But his practice latterly had taken a downward course. Like many a promising painter, having once secured his standing in the profession, he seems to have attained the summit of his ambition. He had ceased to be a student, and become a professor with a settled style of painting, to which nature had thenceforth to conform. Content to repeat himself, he had allowed his art to degenerate, as it always

<sup>1</sup> See *supra*, p. 218, n. 2.



does in such a case. His painting, which had depended for some of its attraction upon manual dexterity and tricks of the brush, became absolute mannerism. He was surpassed by better artists, and forgotten before he died.

During the four years of his short connexion with the Water-Colour Society, he remained an Associate only. From 1809 to 1811 he had five drawings each year, and in 1812 he had two, making seventeen in all. They were nearly all views in Devon and Cornwall, with three or four in Wales. Often, like Glover, he specifies the time of day or the weather, three being 'moonlights.' One was a professed 'composition,' and another represented 'Banditti.' The South Kensington Gallery possesses eight of his drawings.<sup>1</sup>

According to Graves, Payne exhibited, between 1776 and 1830, ninety-one works: seventeen at the Society of Artists, twenty-two at the Royal Academy, fifty at the British Institution, and two at Suffolk Street. The dates of his birth and death have not been ascertained.<sup>2</sup>

EDMUND DORRELL was another of the many good artists who have been induced by a natural longing to take up the brush in preference to the occupations designed for them by the guardians of their youth. He was brought up by an uncle, who intended to make him a doctor, having himself a good medical practice at Warwick, where Dorrell was born in 1778; but helped him to be a painter when he discovered his bent. Dorrell had begun to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1807. He sent thirty-nine drawings to the Water-Colour Society's four exhibitions (1809 to 1812) at Spring Gardens; mostly picturesque landscape subjects, without special topographic interest. Cottages and trees and river-banks in the home counties supplied most of his material. With them there were one or two views in Monmouthshire, and sometimes studies of cottage children. His drawings are very pleasing, but, not being numerous, are not often seen. He treated his subjects with an artistic eye and some poetic feeling, endowing well-balanced compositions with deep and warm tones of colour.

<sup>1</sup> There is a drawing by Payne at the British Museum, on absorbent paper, with dark trees, powerful in colour.

<sup>2</sup> Some speculations as to the identity or connexion of W. Payne (who exhibited at R.A. 1821-1822), W. R. Payne, jun., and Matthew Payne of Coventry, are in *Notes and Queries*, 6th series, i. 522, ii. 277.

CHARLES WILD was born in London in 1781, the second son in a large family,<sup>1</sup> and was therefore about twenty-eight when he joined the Society as an Associate. He had in his earlier youth been articled to Turner's perspective-master, Thomas Malton, and from the first had devoted himself to architectural subjects, using his pen and pencil with the geometrical rigour of a professed architect, and with the same neatness of detail. This minute truthfulness was retained when, becoming more of a painter, he gave to such representations the superadded charm of pictorial treatment, with refined and delicately harmonized colour. In 1803 he began to exhibit his drawings at the Royal Academy, with two views at Christ Church, Oxford, and from that year to 1810 had nine drawings there; those of 1805 being of Westminster Abbey, and those of 1808 of York Cathedral. From 1809 to 1812, he brought five drawings a year to the Society's collection. They were nearly all views of English cathedrals, of which he had, some years before, commenced the production of a long series of engraved illustrations, that continued to be issued for many years. Those of Canterbury, York, Chester, and Lichfield were published between 1807 and 1813. Some of the titles of Wild's drawings are accompanied by illustrative verses, which indicate a poetic treatment. His 'Canterbury' has its pilgrims, and one drawing, of 1812, 'The Trial of Constance de Beverley,' from the second canto of *Marmion*, seems even to have belonged to the class of 'subject' pictures.

FREDERICK NASH, another architectural draftsman of great eminence, was in his line a most accomplished painter, and contributed largely in after years to the Society's exhibitions. He joined it, as above recorded, a year after the accession of Wild, whose junior he was by about the same space of time. He was already in good practice. His merits as a draftsman had not only gained him employment by eminent architects of the day (Sir Robert Smirke among them, from whose designs he made drawings), but were known to the public by divers engraved works.

There is some danger of confusion between three successive Nashes, of no known kinship, but all connected with architecture and its graphic illustration. There was John Nash, the builder and architect already mentioned, Pugin's friend and employer. There was Frederick Nash, now before us. And there was Joseph Nash,

<sup>1</sup> He was nephew, on the mother's side, of Sir Isaac Herd, Garter King-at-Arms.

another, but much younger, member of the Society, who will have to be dealt with by-and-by. Our present subject, the elder draftsman of the name, was the son of a respectable builder in Lambeth, and there first saw the light on the 28th of March, 1782. He was the youngest child of his mother, separated in age from the rest of her offspring by an interval of ten years. The latter circumstance, added to his own engaging nature as a child, made him the pet of the family, among whom his infantine fancy for decorating all scraps of paper that came in his way with ships, houses, and trees, was duly recalled when it became apparent that, tractable on most subjects, he was immovable in his choice of a profession. In after life he admitted that he had not known his own interest. But the world is a gainer by his want of that knowledge. He thought (and there are precedents in his favour) that 'to be an artist was greater than to be a king.' So, rejecting the offer of a rich relative to pay all costs and give him other advantages if he would only be a lawyer, he clung to his pencil, and had to be placed with an architectural draftsman. His master was one Moreton (said to have been of repute at the time), who gave him a thorough grounding in perspective. Thence he entered the schools of the Academy in the early days of President West, and at the age of eighteen exhibited there his first view of Westminster Abbey, the subject of some of his finest and most important paintings. This represented the 'North Entrance.'

During the next ten years he drew for the engravers. In Britton and Brayley's voluminous work, *The Beauties of England and Wales*, may be found at least twenty prints after drawings by F. Nash, bearing dates of publication from 1801 to 1809. In 1805 a series of aquatint views, exterior and interior, by him, of *The Collegiate Chapel of St. George at Windsor*, was published with explanatory letterpress. When engaged in preparing this work, he was received by King George the Third with marked kindness and condescension. 'There is,' says Mr. Maurice B. Adams, 'a thoroughness of purpose in these so-called pre-Puginesque works, not always conspicuous in our own contemporaneous productions.'<sup>1</sup> This series was followed by *Twelve Views of the Antiquities of London*, 'for the illustration of Lysons, Pennant, &c.,' 4to, 1805-1810. He also exhibited water-colour drawings at the Royal Academy, and his name is in the first volume of Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*, published in 1807, as

<sup>1</sup> Paper on *Architectural Illustrations*, 1877, p. 7.



the draftsman of five of the plates (one of the Temple Church and four of Malmesbury Abbey). To this period also belongs an 'Inside View of King's College Chapel in Cambridge,' engraved, with date 4 May, 1808, by John Byrne, in *Britannia Depicta*, Part II.

In 1808 he was an exhibitor with the Associated Artists, and in 1809 a Member of that Society; contributing, in these two years, eight drawings. They included two interiors of Westminster Abbey, the West Front of St. Paul's, a large drawing of the choir of Canterbury Cathedral, and several ruins in Wales and the North of England. In 1810 he became, instead, a contributor to the old Society, exhibiting his five drawings as an Associate. In 1811, having become a Member, he sends twenty-two, followed by nine in 1812. Some were called 'sketches,' but others were superb and highly finished drawings. They included subjects from London and the neighbourhood, Westminster Abbey, the Temple Church and the Savoy Chapel, St. Albans, Eltham, and Windsor, the cathedrals of Salisbury and Lincoln, and the Yorkshire abbeys of Fountains and Kirkstall.

Pyne informs us that one of the drawings exhibited by Nash in 1811, an 'Inside of Westminster Abbey, with Funeral Procession,' drew forth a special tribute of praise from Benjamin West, another instance of the lively interest taken by that kindly President of the Academy in the progress of the water-colour school. He took it as a text to combat the dictum of an amateur that 'such subjects demanded little more than a mere mechanical application of the executive part of painting.' 'It is true,' said West, 'that an accurate view of this or any other building may be drawn on mechanical principles, but to describe the scene under the influence of this grand and pictorial sentiment is as much an affair of mind as to represent nature under the gorgeous colouring of a Titian.'<sup>1</sup> This drawing was purchased from the artist by Mr. T. T. Wheeler, of the New Road, a liberal patron of water-colour art, for 155*l*. A very large and fine work, 46½ × 35 inches in size, answering to the above description, was lent by Mr. Henry Carr for exhibition at a conversazione of the Royal Water-Colour Society Art Club in 1886. It was well preserved, and would fully justify West's encomium. Other important drawings of the same interior were made by Nash at later dates, which will be referred to in due course.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 128.

On the 5th of May, 1807, Nash was appointed architectural draftsman to the Society of Antiquaries ; and he was employed in work for that body for many years.

The year 1810 also introduces to us the distinguished artists *De Wint* and *Copley Fielding*, who were to take leading parts in the achievements of the Society in the sunny days to come.

PETER DE WINT, as his name implies, was of Dutch extraction. His father was a physician, with a Leyden degree, practising at Stone in Staffordshire. His ancestors were wealthy merchants of Amsterdam. The penultimate generation had migrated to New York, whence our artist's father, Henry De Wint, a second son, came back to Europe for medical instruction, with an allowance of 300*l.* a year and a comfortable prospect of marrying a cousin, practising the healing art in America, and being otherwise well provided for. All this might have happened had not the young man, on attaining his majority, chosen to fall in love with and marry a lady of Scotch descent, whose British blood did not compensate, in his parent's eyes, for her slender fortune. One result of this imprudence was that his father disowned him, stopped his allowance, and, dying from an accident soon after, was found to have cut him off with a shilling. Another was, that he remained in England ; and thus we are able to number among our most cherished native artists his fourth son, Peter De Wint, who was born at Stone aforesaid on the 21st day of January, 1784.

Peter was at first intended for his father's profession, but, evincing a marked predilection for graphic art, which declared itself in a constant use of the pencil,<sup>1</sup> and in lonely rambles after nature, he was allowed to learn drawing of a local professor, one Rogers of Stafford, and at the age of eighteen to abandon a study of the healing art, upon which he had unwillingly entered, and go to London as a resident pupil of John Raphael Smith.<sup>2</sup> It was on the 7th of June, 1802, that the indentures were signed which bound him 'prentice for seven years

<sup>1</sup> His after calling as an instructor, too, was foreshadowed in these early days ; for he not only drew himself, but taught his schoolfellows to do the same. Thus they could boast in future times of having had ' lessons from De Wint ' (and *gratis*!).

<sup>2</sup> It is conjectured by Mr. Armstrong that John Raphael Smith's brother, Thomas Correggio Smith, who was a painter of miniatures at Uttoxeter, may have been the channel through which this connexion was brought about. (See *Memoir of Peter De Wint.*)

(*plus* an extra year's service in lieu of premium), and whereby Smith engaged to teach him 'the arts and mysteries of engraving and portrait-painting.' We are already acquainted with the name of this lively mezzotint engraver, draftsman, and taker of likenesses in crayons, Morland's gay associate, the publisher for whom Turner and Girtin coloured prints together when boys. Those days were old when De Wint came to him for instruction. The acts of that earlier generation were but traditions of the past in Smith's studio. Poor Morland's reckless career was virtually ended. That same year 1802 saw him released for a time from his creditors, but utterly broken, to die miserably, again a captive, after two sad winters more had flown.<sup>1</sup> In the same year Girtin passed away, and Turner was enrolled an Academician. Smith himself was entering his last decade.<sup>2</sup> And in the same year the little *partie carrée* in George Street, Hanover Square, were already discussing the prospects of their art, and laying the foundations of the Society which our young student was destined so richly to adorn.

Among the young artists at Raphael Smith's in this later time was William Hilton, afterwards R.A., and distinguished among the history painters for his high aims in art. We all know his 'Finding the Body of Harold,' in the National collection. He was junior to De Wint by more than two years, but had begun his studies earlier, having become a pupil of Smith's in 1800. He began to exhibit at the Academy in 1803. The fields of art afterwards cultivated by Hilton and De Wint were about as widely separate as they could well be; but their amiable natures had much in common, and, brought together thus, they struck up a mutual friendship which united them very closely ever after. While at Smith's they showed a similarity in taste, or rather in distaste, in their preference of the mystery of painting to that of engraving, and the master had the good sense to humour their natural predilection. Being an ardent fisherman, he used to take the two cronies out with him and let them sketch while he indulged in his sport. This was at any rate the very thing to suit De Wint. But his attachment to Hilton on one occasion brought about less amicable relations between master and pupil. Hilton took upon himself to play truant and run away home, and De Wint, to whom he had confided his intention, declining to betray him by

<sup>1</sup> George Morland died 29 October, 1804, aged forty-one.

<sup>2</sup> John Raphael Smith died 2 March, 1812, in his sixtieth year.



declaring whither he had gone, was actually clapped into prison, like Girtin, as a refractory apprentice, until the facts had otherwise transpired. Smith was, however, more kindly as well as more appreciative of genius than Dayes had been; for, although it happened that De Wint was released from his apprenticeship before its time had expired, the indentures being cancelled for a valuable consideration, the terms of this transaction showed how highly the master esteemed his pupil's work as an artist. It was on the 17th of May, 1806, that young De Wint purchased his freedom under an agreement—which he faithfully performed—to paint for Smith within the following two years eighteen oil pictures (nine in each year) of specified sizes, varying from 11 × 9 in. to 2 ft. 3 in. × 1 ft. 2 in.

Hilton's apprenticeship ending at about the same time, the two young men continued to pursue together their careers in life.<sup>1</sup> Before settling in a joint lodging, however, each paid a visit to the other's home. Hilton's father was a portrait-painter living at Lincoln, and thither they first repaired. And there it fell out that De Wint fell in love at the same time with Hilton's sister Harriet and with their native city and the country round about it. Both became objects of his devotion to the end of his life.

Then he travelled to his father's home in Staffordshire, sketching on the way the High Tor at Matlock, ever after a favourite subject of his; and Hilton followed soon after. It was in the autumn of 1806 that the two took up their quarters in Broad Street, Golden Square. This, it will be recollected, is the same street in which at that time resided John Varley, and De Wint is known to have derived much benefit from gratuitous counsel and instruction in landscape art received from that able expert. At about the same time De Wint was received by Dr. Monro as one of the knot of students who frequented his house in Adelphi Terrace. His kind host is said to have much admired his sketches. There he became acquainted with the works of Girtin, which were his favourites among all the drawings in the Doctor's collection. And there he probably acquired the germ of his future practice as a water-colour painter. The earliest drawing known to the writer from the hand of De Wint is a sketch at South Kensington, the gift of the artist's daughter, Mrs. Tatlock, called 'Tutbury Castle,' and attributed to the year 1805 or 1806. In it

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Armstrong finds their names united as brother recruits in the 'St. Margaret's and St. John's Volunteer' corps, about 1805.

the influence of Girtin is so strongly marked that it might easily be mistaken for a work by that master.<sup>1</sup>

In 1807 De Wint is first found exhibiting at the Royal Academy, where he has two views in Staffordshire, one being of Trentham, and a 'View of High Torr, Matlock,' doubtless from his sketch in the preceding year. He must have been much occupied at this time in executing his commission of pictures for Raphael Smith;<sup>2</sup> but, although his biographer declares that 'his strong preference was for oils,' he seems already to have made up his mind to rely on water-colour art for his living, and to adopt that as his professed branch of painting.

In 1808, on the opening of the gallery of the Associated Artists, he sent there four drawings for exhibition; and he had nine there in 1809, in which year he was made a full Member of that body. One of his drawings in 1808 was a view of Westminster from the bridge; and two views in the following year were at Lincoln. These drawings are much praised by a contemporary critic. He describes them as being 'of the very first class. Correct observation of nature, fine selection of form, with the greatest truth and simplicity of colour, are the characteristics of his style. His works have all the indications of superior thinking, all the germs of greatness.'<sup>3</sup>

How long the fellow-students remained in Broad Street is not clear. De Wint's address, as given in the catalogues of the above exhibitions for 1807 and 1808, is 40 Windmill Street, Rathbone Place. As his father died in May 1807, leaving the younger children partly dependent on Peter, a change of residence may then have been made. But wherever he was, it is probable that Hilton was there also. An incident which occurred in February 1809 fixes a date when at least they were together. Hilton was ill of a fever, and his friend, while running for a doctor (De Wint, a nurse more zealous than careful, having administered to the patient vinegar instead of drugs), was impeded in his progress by the fire that destroyed Drury Lane Theatre, which event happened on the 24th of that month. Hilton, getting better, returned home for a while, and De Wint, after spending the summer with him at Lincoln, was alone for a few months in Carburton Street.

<sup>1</sup> In the *Northern Cambrian Mountains*, folio, 1820, Plate 35 is a coloured aquatint of 'Chirk Castle: painted by De Wint from a sketch by T. Girtin,' engraved by T. Fielding.

<sup>2</sup> Some were of Lincoln.

<sup>3</sup> *Repository of Arts*, i. 493 (1809).

On the 8th of March in the same year, 1809, he was admitted a student at the Royal Academy, Hilton having entered the schools there on leaving Smith's in 1806. In the autumn they again put up together at No. 93 Norton Street, Fitzroy Square. By that time a demand had arisen for De Wint's drawings, and he was receiving many commissions.

It was on the 12th of February, 1810, that he was elected an Associate of the Water-Colour Society, and on the 16th of June in the same year Miss Hilton became his sympathetic partner for life. He was then twenty-six years of age. His marriage did not separate him from his old companion, now his brother-in-law, who lived with the married couple in their new residence, No. 10 Percy Street, for the next seventeen years. De Wint still continued to study at the Academy, and was admitted to the Life School on the 16th of March, 1811. But in his profession as a landscape-painter he was now well established, and on the 10th of June in the same year became a full Member of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours. In that year his wife gave birth to a daughter, their only child. In the three years 1810-1812 he exhibited in increasing numbers—eighteen drawings in all—at Spring Gardens. Of these, three are professedly views at Lincoln (one of the cathedral), one is 'Conisborough Castle, Yorkshire,' and nearly all the rest, if not described simply as 'Landscapes,' are harvest scenes. It was in a similar round of home and rural subjects that his great talents were displayed year by year during the long space of his professional life.

It is probably to this early period only of De Wint's career that his biographer's account must be taken to apply which records that 'at first he received no more than a guinea or so for a small drawing, and five shillings an hour for lessons.'<sup>1</sup>

COPLEY FIELDING was another of the new comers who entered the fraternity as a disciple, though not, as it has been asserted, a regular pupil, of Varley's. He did not possess the originality or native talent of a De Wint; and in his case no tales are told of an irresistible *penchant* for art that overcame all opposition. The persistence required on his part was only what the task demanded of fostering and improving such natural aptitude as he was found to possess. At the same time, his great success and deserved popularity

<sup>1</sup> Armstrong's *Memoir of De Wint*, p. 19.



as an artist were due in no small degree to his own steadfastness and perseverance. He seems indeed to have been consecrated to art in his very baptism. The names that his godfathers and godmother had bestowed upon him, in the church of East Sowerby, 'Anthony Vandyke Copley,' high-sounding though they were, did not, it is true, exactly foreshadow the line of art to which he afterwards devoted himself. The last is a testimony to his father's friendship for John Singleton Copley, R.A., the distinguished painter of the 'Death of Lord Chatham' &c., and father of Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst. The first two indicate his respect for one of the greatest of his own calling; for Theodore Nathan Fielding, at the time of his son Copley's birth, was in practice as a portrait painter, near Halifax in Yorkshire. He had, however, painted landscapes before he took to portraiture. He had four sons, at least, born at rather long intervals, all of whom he encouraged in the use of the pencil and all of whom became successful artists. Of these Copley, born on the 22nd of November, 1787, was the second. His elder brother was Theodore Henry Adolphus. The younger ones had the more manageable names of Thales and Newton. Their mother was of a respectable family in Yorkshire of the name of Barker.

A few months after Copley's birth, Mr. Fielding removed, with his family, to London. The greater part of the lad's time was, nevertheless, passed in the country. Even in infancy he had been observed to be sensitive to the beauty of nature. A woody bank at one time, a thunderstorm at another, made indelible impressions on his mind before he was three years old. The walks, through fields, to his preparatory school at Acton were, we may be sure, a greater pleasure to him than they would have been to an ordinary child of five. At the age of six, he chanced to see a pure spring bubbling from under a stony bank with overhanging bushes, and the vision of it kept recurring to his memory for years after. Yet we hear of none of the early attempts to portray such objects which are so commonly recorded in the lives of great artists. His education was desultory, but he took great delight in reading.

His parents do not appear to have at first intended him for an artist. Indeed, a record exists of his having actually entered upon a very different career. In a *Memoir of Thomas Dodd*, 'the last of the grand school of connoisseurs,' privately printed at Liverpool for Joseph Mayer, F.S.A., in 1879, it is related that Dodd, when an engrossing clerk in the

Enrolment Office of the Court of Chancery, 'had two young clerks under him, who were destined to become famous. They were the sons of an old painter named Fielding, and were called Copley and Raffael.'<sup>1</sup> It was not, indeed, until Copley arrived at his sixteenth year, when his father went to reside at the Lakes, that his future profession was fixed. There the family established themselves in a little cottage at Ambleside, and afterwards at Keswick; and there Mr. Fielding did his best to promote his sons' improvement in the art of landscape.

His own qualifications as a teacher would be differently estimated by the adherents of different schools. What they were may be partly inferred from the following account of him at this period, from notes written by the Rev. Mr. Barker, no doubt a relation of Mrs. Fielding's: 'In the summer of 1804, the father of Copley Fielding was a lively, active man, of easy access and agreeable conversation, daily at the easel, painting *con amore*. He showed his pictures readily, and not without much satisfaction. Of a head of an old man, which he had recently painted, and which had elicited some admiration, he said, "Yes, they call me the English *Denner*."<sup>2</sup> He painted in oil, exclusively I think, and appeared as fond of landscape as of old faces. In his room were several small pictures, chiefly landscapes, painted by him and copied by his sons. Taking up one, he said, "Copley, is this mine or yours?" adding, "We copy each other so exactly, it is difficult to know which is which." One day, on going in I found Mr. Fielding finishing a small picture in oils of Keswick Lake. In the sky was a light cloud elaborately painted, and principal in effect. He joined in my admiration of it and said, pointing to the cloud, "It would take a touch brighter," and after a pause, "No, I don't know." My recollection of this picture is that it was laboured in the touch throughout, of a uniform warmish green colour, and wanted ærial hues, and consequently space and distance. Of another small picture he showed me, of a bluish hue, he said, "I was determined to see what ultramarine would do." In colour it reminded me a little of Paul Brill, or Velvet Breughel.'

<sup>1</sup> Page 22. Whether 'Raffael' was a fifth artist brother, does not appear.

<sup>2</sup> The reader need scarcely be told that Denner is usually regarded as the type of a school of imitative painters whose highest ambition is to copy, in a deceptive manner, the very pores of the skin. Bryan calls him a 'laborious painter, whose works surprise by the toilsome servility of their finish, as much as they disgust by a total absence of all that is estimable in the art.' Probably Mr. Fielding's estimate was higher.

But the father provided the young Fieldings with other and better models than his own paintings. He was very desirous of their improvement in the art, and used to send them out early in the morning to draw from nature. 'They don't return,' said he, 'till the evening, till it is dark; and if that won't do, I know not what will.' The lads, however, were not always employed with the brush, as their father had supposed, from morn to dewy eve. Sometimes they had with them, in their day's ramble, their only sister, a blooming girl of sixteen or so, extremely healthy and active, as well as adventurous, for she is said to have had the nerve to scramble across the well-known mass of rock that is wedged over the chasm of Dungeon ghyll. And Copley Fielding related in after years, with much sly fun, how he and his brothers once laboured for a whole morning, heaping up stones, not indeed, as Glover did in Dovedale,<sup>1</sup> to make a stream more paintable, but to change the course of a waterfall, when they knew that a party of tourists in search of the picturesque were coming to admire its natural beauty.

The Fieldings had for a neighbour a painter whose works in water-colour were good enough to exercise a salutary influence on their art, whether it did or not—namely, Julius Cæsar Ibbetson, then living at the retired village of Troutbeck, about four miles from Ambleside, with his second wife, whom he had married a few years before. She, at least, visited the Fieldings. She is described as young and handsome, and we seem to be familiar with her dark hair and bright complexion, among the telling rustic groups that adorned her husband's later landscapes.<sup>2</sup>

It was during this residence at the Lakes that the bias of Copley Fielding's mind asserted its strength, and determined his lot in life. The scenes he there met with filled him with delight. But for some time he passed his days on the lakes, and in wanderings over rock and mountain, through wood and through valley, storing his mind

<sup>1</sup> *Vide supra*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> Though he followed the old tinted method, Ibbetson was an effective painter in water-colour, delicate in touch, though firm and decided. His painting in oil showed some resemblance to his friend Morland's, and to that of Berghem, whom he copied. In 1803, he published the first and only part of *An Accidence or Gamut in Oil and Water-Colours*, the first edition of which he illustrated with original specimens, apparently painting two separate examples, one in oils and one in water-colours, for each copy of the work, of different designs. He was born in 1759 and died in 1817. His reputation has suffered from association with Morland's, let us hope on no better ground than that of Thomas Girtin. Some excellent drawings by Ibbetson were in the late Dr. Percy's collection.



with impressions, and leading a kind of enchanted life, without making any serious attempt to put into form his floating ideas. His daughter declares that it was the sight and study at this time of some of Wilson's pictures that inspired him with the desire to be an artist. And the fact accords with the theory that Fielding's success in practice did not arise from any marked originality of conception. From this study of Wilson he derived great benefit, particularly from a copy which he made in water-colours of 'Apollo and the Seasons.' 'They assisted,' writes Miss Fielding,<sup>1</sup> 'in forming that correct taste which could only be satisfied with the works of the first Masters.'

In 1807 he accompanied his father to Liverpool, and, offering his drawings for sale there, was encouraged by an amount of patronage which he always referred to with expressions of gratitude.<sup>2</sup> In 1808 he made a tour in Wales, by Flint and the Vale of Clwyd to Chester. But a visit to town in the same year, to see the exhibitions, for the first time opened out to him a prospect of greater advantage than could be expected at Liverpool, and induced him to settle in London in the autumn of 1809. There he enjoyed the great benefit of assistance from Varley in the formation of his artistic style, though he never was an actual pupil, as it has been asserted, of that excellent artist's. He 'came to town,' writes Cornelius Varley,<sup>3</sup> 'with indifferent drawings, and received most free instruction and advice, as a friend,' from John, who, we know, was always ready and willing to lend a helping hand in this way to his professional brethren. Of Varley's genius and liberality, Fielding always spoke with the highest commendation. In order to be near him, he took a lodging in Wells Street. Varley was then living in Broad Street, Golden Square. He does not seem to have been sanguine at first of the student's success. Observing the slowness with which the young man imbibed his principles, Varley was even induced, it is said, to dissuade him from his professional pursuit. But Fielding was not lightly to be deterred

<sup>1</sup> MS.

<sup>2</sup> Carey in his *Letter to J. A.* (28 April, 1809), p. 19, writes from Manchester: 'Fielding is here, a veteran artist whose old heads in the manner of Denner are purchased at high prices by the admirers of that master. . . . He has a son, a young artist of great merit, who gives instructions as a drawing master at Liverpool. I do not know him, but I saw at the house of Mr. Harrison, a merchant of that town, among other clever drawings by young Fielding, a moonlight view of Melrose Abbey, from Walter Scott's *Marmion*, in which there was a very lovely stillness and solemnity.'

<sup>3</sup> MS.

from treading the path of life which had been chalked out for him. Varley recommended him to make coloured sketches from nature in the neighbourhood of London, and acting upon his advice, and guided by his criticism, he by the end of that year had acquired proficiency enough to obtain his election as an Associate of the Water-Colour Society in January 1810. In the season that followed, he exhibited his first five drawings at Spring Gardens, most of them views in the Lake district.

When the exhibition closed, he went into Cumberland to study nature and visit his brother Theodore at Penrith, going afterwards to Carlisle and making an excursion to Haworth Castle, Lanercost Priory, and down Tynedale as far as Hexham, &c. In the following month he made a tour in Scotland—through Dumfries and Selkirk to Melrose and back to Carlisle. Results of this tour were seen in the exhibition of 1811. At the close of that summer he went to Liverpool, and paid another visit to Wales, which furnished some of his subjects of 1812. He was then on the threshold of the more important period of his career, and there he must be left, in order that some account may be rendered of other new Associates, with names less widely known in the present day.

WILLIAM WESTALL, who was elected five months after Fielding, contributed only twelve drawings (in 1811 and 1812) to the Society's exhibitions, and but a third of these belong to the branch of art which he specially represented. His experience had been of no ordinary kind. He was a younger brother, by no less than sixteen years, of Richard Westall, R.A., whose leading position in the figure school has been above recorded, and from whom he had received his early instruction. But his own practice had been in a very different and much wider field. He had been a great traveller, and the labours by which he was distinguished give him an important place in the line of topographic artists whose mission it was to portray distant parts of the earth's surface. While his brother draftsmen were devoting their energies to the better cultivation of the art itself by continued practice at home, by repeating under varied aspects the selfsame views among their Welsh mountains, and studying again and again familiar scenes of native life and landscape, Westall had been bringing new material within the range of its application.

He was born on the 12th of October, 1781, at Hertford, whither

his parents had removed from Norwich, to which city the family belonged. His early years were spent still nearer London, at Sydenham and Hampstead. His passion for art was displayed when he was very young, and he would play truant from school to sketch from nature. He was under nineteen, a probationer at the Royal Academy, when President West picked him out as fit for a Government appointment as landscape draftsman to a discovery ship about to sail for what geographers called 'Terra Australis,' and less classic linguists 'the fifth quarter of the globe.'<sup>1</sup> Thenceforth much of his life had been passed in perilous adventure. Embarking in H.M.S. *Investigator*, Commander Flinders, which sailed from Spithead on the 18th of July, 1801, he soon had an opportunity of plying his pencil. Landing at Madeira, a scientific party explored the interior, and Westall, going with them, made many sketches of the scenery. On their return to the ship, however, the native boatmen upset them into the surf, and besides losing all the fruits of his toil, our artist was nearly drowned. Next he was struck down and again brought to death's door by a *coup de soleil*. For two years the ship continued her cruise, and then she was found to be unseaworthy and left at Port Jackson; Westall and most of the voyagers being transferred to H.M.S. *Porpoise*, which, instead of bringing them safely back to England, deposited them on a small coral reef in the Pacific, whence they were rescued after a lapse of eight weeks. Westall, who had happily saved most of his drawings, was carried off to China by the good ship *Rolla*, and remained some months at Canton, sketching there and up the river memoranda of the scenery and its celestial inhabitants. Thence he sailed to Bombay, where he was the first to contradict a report that he and his shipwrecked companions had perished on their reef.

Since Westall had left England, the short peace with France had come and gone; and he chanced to be an eye-witness of the first naval success of the new war. For the ship<sup>2</sup> in which he had set sail from China was one of the fleet of merchantmen with which the gallant Commodore Dance, of the East India Company's service, beat

<sup>1</sup> William Daniell, afterwards R.A., had been first appointed, but, becoming engaged to be married to Westall's eldest sister, preferred to stay at home. Probably he, as well as West, had a voice in the selection of the substitute.

<sup>2</sup> As Lieut. Fowler, R.N., who had commanded the ill-fated *Porpoise*, and was of great service in this action, had embarked as a passenger in Dance's ship, the *Earl Camden*, it is probable that Westall was with him in that vessel. The *Rolla* had also been put under Dance's charge, to convoy, but had somehow got left behind at Macao. (See *Annual Register*, pp. 551, 552.)



off and pursued a French squadron under Admiral Linois, in the Straits of Malacca, on the 15th of February, 1804. The good will of the Duke of Wellington (then commanding in India as Sir Arthur Wellesley) enabled our artist to explore the mountains of the Mahratta country; and among those of the Boa Ghaut he fell in with the victorious Indian army, that had fought the battle of Assaye in the preceding September. He also visited the temples of Kurllee and Elephanta, and other places of interest, of which he made careful drawings on the spot.

During his travels in India, Westall was appalled by sufferings which met his eye, the effects of famine and drought. His son tells us that 'he was always much affected when alluding, in after life, to the horrors he here beheld,' and relates at the same time an anecdote which exemplifies his kindness of heart.<sup>1</sup> One of his servants, having taken advantage of the utter destitution of a native family, had, as a slave speculation, purchased an only remaining son for little more than a meal and a few pounds of rice. Westall, shocked and disgusted with the sordid cruelty of the transaction, watched his opportunity, and when he had to cross from the coast to Bombay island, the servants and baggage being aboard, and he and the new slave alone remaining ashore to be conveyed to the vessel, slipped some money into the young man's hand, and silently pointed to his native mountains. The youth 'threw himself on the ground and kissed his benefactor's feet, then with the swiftness of a deer darted towards his home, and was out of sight in a few minutes,' leaving the discomfited servant 'lamenting' (like my Lord Ullin) on the vessel's deck.

At Bombay, Westall received kind attentions from Sir James Mackintosh, then residing there as Recorder, and in return gave his daughter lessons in drawing. He described Sir James as suffering from nostalgia. He himself too had a mind to see his own land again. He had left home, a lad, before Girtin went to Paris. Now he had grown to man's estate, and, returning to England, found a new page open in the annals of his profession. The Water-Colour Society was formed, and blossoming in its first exhibition.

But Westall could not settle down so soon to home work. The taste for travel was yet upon him, and off he went to Madeira in 1805,

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, Memoir of Wm. Westall, A.R.A. (1 April, 1850, p. 104), from which most of the above account is derived.

to pass a year there in great enjoyment, and make up in new sketches the loss of his first portfolio ; receiving there much kindness from the British residents, and, by painting the houses of planters and merchants, raising a sufficient fund to enable him to cross the Atlantic and complete his collection of drawings with a large number of sketches made during a few further months in Jamaica.

Returning to England once more, he set to work to make pictures out of the materials he had collected in the two hemispheres ; and in 1808 opened an exhibition of his own, in Brook Street, of water-colour drawings of the scenes and places he had visited. It did not however, arouse the expected interest, and Westall had to fall back upon home scenes, in which he had to compete with artists to whom they were more familiar.

He joined the 'Associated Artists' in water-colours as an exhibiting Member in 1808 and 1809. In the first of these years he had ten works in their gallery, all foreign views. In the second he had fifteen, whereof the greater number were home subjects, from Worcestershire and the Wye. His works of the former class are favourably noticed at some length in John Landseer's *Review of Publications in Art* (1808), but the latter called forth the remark of a contemporary critic that the artist's unsuccessful delineations of English scenery had shaken previous belief in the truth of his foreign views.<sup>1</sup> He was now, however, obtaining commissions to paint oil pictures, and, on the ground that his time was so occupied, he sent in his resignation on the 27th of June, 1809. Nevertheless he became an Associate of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours on the 11th of June, 1810. With his few drawings at Spring Gardens of views in China, Madeira, and New South Wales, were some of the London Thames and Rievaulx Abbey.

He had only now begun to prepare for publication the set of drawings made during the ill-fated voyage of discovery ; the history as well as the completion of which had been delayed by adverse fate. Long and far as our artist had wandered, after his rescue from the coral reef, he had got back to England years before his less fortunate commander. Flinders was picked up by a small schooner, the *Cumberland*, and on the way home, while his brave lieutenant was fighting the French with such success in the Malacca Strait, was captured by the enemy ; and he was detained in a long and cruel confinement

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*, i. 493.

in the island of Mauritius. He did not arrive in England until the very year 1810 when Westall joined the Water-Colour Society, and the book of travels was not published until after that artist's connexion with the Society had ceased.

The name of WILLIAM SCOTT, though he was a competent painter, and long an exhibitor with the Society, has left no strong mark in its annals. Scarcely anything has been recorded of his personal history, and the dates of his birth and death are alike unknown. Even the industrious Redgrave tells us less than we gather from the catalogues. His home was Brighton, whence, says that writer, he seldom strayed abroad; and 'home scenery and cottages of Sussex and Surrey' were the class of subjects which introduced him to our gallery in 1811. He then brought five drawings. The next year he had three, two of which were from Edinburgh. In the catalogue for the latter year, a work by him is advertized, with the title '*Six Etchings on Stone*, printed on brown crayon paper and retouched with white, to imitate drawings in black and white chalk,' to be had of P. S. Munn, New Bond Street, and of other 'persons in London' therein named.

As the three Associates, *Charles Barber*, *Luke Clennell*, and, lastly not least, *David Cox*, were not elected until after the close of the exhibition of 1812, their names do not virtually belong to the period of the Society's annals which this year brought to an end. More special notice of them will therefore be reserved for its proper place in the chronicle of the succeeding period, when their names and works are first recorded in the exhibition catalogue. The election at the same time, namely on the 8th of June, 1812, of *Wild* and *Pugin* as full Members, was, as it turned out, little more than nominal, by reason of important events which have now to be related.



## CHAPTER IV

## FALL OF THE FIRST SOCIETY

Statistics—Decline of prosperity—Further history of ‘Associated Artists’—Their decline and fall—Proposal to extend the Society—Its dissolution—Final biographies of retiring Members—*Wells—Rigaud—Reinagle—Chalon—The ‘Sketching Society’—Westall.*

It has now to be explained why this particular epoch of 1812 has been selected to terminate the first stage of our Society’s history. For this purpose recourse must be had to the minute-books of the committee and general meetings during that period. The following schedule compiled therefrom will exhibit at a glance the progress of the Society, considered purely as a business undertaking, from its first exhibition in 1805 to that of 1812.

Year	Members	Asso- ciates	Drawings	Admissions on payment	Members' valuations	Surplus divided
1805	16	—	275	11,542 <sup>1</sup>	£ s. d. 2,860 0 0	£ s. d. 270 19 0
1806	16	8	301	12,439	Return wanting	440 3 0
1807	18	8	324	14,366	4,380 1 0	471 7 10½
1808	19	7	334	18,999	5,787 1 6	445 14 8
1809	20	7	341	22,967	5,222 5 0	626 6 11½
1810	22	8	328	20,030	4,807 17 0	480 14 0
1811	24	8	369	19,067	6,610 15 6	523 7 5
1812	25	6	341	10,624	4,498 11 6	121 18 4

It appears by this statement that until 1810 there had been a satisfactory improvement in the Society’s position almost year by year. The public had been attracted in constantly increasing numbers. Artists who had held aloof while success appeared doubtful had eagerly sought admission when the permanence of the Society seemed assured, with a growing surplus to be distributed at the close of each season rateably on the sum each Member set upon his works. In 1809, when the Society moved to Spring Gardens, this prosperity was at its height. The number of paid admissions

<sup>1</sup> Approximately.

had risen to nearly 23,000, and every Member received a profit little under 12 per cent. upon the price he had assigned to his contributions. Heaphy in that year came in for as much as 130*l.*, Glover 104*l.*, and the rest in due proportion. No one seems to have questioned the prudence of so dividing the whole of the profits, though this practice proved in the end a source of danger that threatened the existence of the Society. Successful beyond their expectations, they hardly contemplated future reverses or the difficulties they had to encounter, which a wise reserve of their funds might have been the means of averting. But after this year there came a turn of the tide. Patronage, with its attendant profits, began from that time to diminish, and in 1812 there was a sudden and serious drop to a lower level in both respects than that at which the Society had ever stood. It was plainly suffering from a general depression of the times, which told with peculiar severity on the artists' craft. The renewed contest with France had strained the resources of the wealthy, and public attention was now absorbed in the events of the Peninsular War.

When the account was taken after the close of that year's exhibition, the balance of profit was found to be so small as to excite reasonable apprehension of a future loss. On Thursday, the 5th of November, 1812, the Society met at Hills's house to take this state of things into consideration, and discuss the prospects of the ensuing season. According to an estimate then made, it did not appear likely that more than 230 drawings would be forthcoming for the next show, a number less by nearly a third than had been exhibited in the preceding spring. It was evident that a serious crisis had arrived in the Society's affairs.

The Members, moreover, could not disregard the warning which had been given by recent events outside their Society. Their rivals in Bond Street had been in still greater trouble. The Associated Artists had fairly broken down under its weight, and ended their career in disaster. The remaining chief facts of their history may here be entered on the record.

During the period now concluded the two Water-Colour Exhibitions, at Spring Gardens and in Bond Street, had come to be regarded as concurrent annual sights of the London season. The *Associated Artists* had removed from Brook Street to 110 New Bond Street in

1809. From 1810 to 1812 they were at 16 Old Bond Street. Before the second exhibition (in 1809) they lost four Members : H. P. Bone, Alfred E. Chalon, Miss Emma Smith, and H. W. Watts. Their places were, for the time, well supplied by P. De Wint, J. Holmes, Frederick Nash, and J. Clarendon Smith. Before the exhibition of 1810, however, De Wint, Nash, and Westall seceded to join the older Society, and J. B. Papworth, W. J. Thompson, and H. W. Williams also ceased to be active Members. Papworth, who had been Secretary, was afterwards made an Honorary Member. In the place of these six, a strong reserve of eight artists was then brought up to reinforce the ranks. The new Members were Luke Clennell, John Sell Cotman, David Cox, W. M. Craig, Louis Francia, Mrs. Meen, Samuel Prout, and Henry Richter. Some of these were of great future distinction, and the majority were, sooner or later, to become Members of the Water-Colour Society. David Cox at the same time succeeded William Wood as President for the year. The number of Members was thus raised from eighteen to twenty, and about as many non-Members were annually admitted as Exhibitors. The works exhibited each year varied in amount between the limits of 266 (in 1809) and 345 (in 1810).

With such constituent elements as these, the series of shows in Bond Street could scarcely fail to be a formidable rival to those at Spring Gardens. The body of skilful painters who afterwards constituted the strength of the Water-Colour Society, when it came again to stand alone in the field, was, at the period we are considering, divided in no very unequal proportions between the two annual exhibitions. At that time, the after leaders of the landscape school, *Cox, De Wint, Prout* ; the architectural draftsmen, *F. Nash* and *Mac-kenzie* ; *Cotman*, excelling in both departments and in marine also ; the subject-painters, *J. Stephanoff, Holmes, Richter*, and *Clennell* ; *William Westall*, too, the traveller ; all these were exhibiting with the Associated Artists before any of them joined the Society where Varley and Havell, Nicholson and Glover, Barret, Cristall, and their earlier *confrères*, retained a supremacy as yet undisputed. The first-named no doubt, were younger men, some of whom—Prout for example—had not yet felt their full strength or acquired their maturer style. They were, moreover, immersed in a crowd of obscure practitioners, so that the exhibitions in Bond Street were, as a whole, less select in quality than those at Spring Gardens, and contained ‘a large propor-



tion of bad and hasty works.' The former might perhaps more truly be described as a nursery for, than as a rival of, the latter.

In general character, the contents of the two galleries had much in common. 'The first thing,' says a contemporary reviewer in June 1810,<sup>1</sup> 'that strikes an observer, both at Spring Gardens and Bond Street, is the overwhelming proportion of landscapes, a proportion almost as unreasonable as that of the portraits at Somerset House. In pacing round the rooms the spectator experiences sensations somewhat similar to those of an outside passenger on a mail-coach making a picturesque and picturizing journey to the North. Mountains and cataracts, rivers, lakes, and woods, deep romantic glens and sublime sweeps of country, engage his eye in endless and ever-varying succession. For a while he is delighted, but as he proceeds the pleasure gradually fades; he feels that even in variety there may be sameness, and would freely exchange a dozen leagues of charming landscape for a scene among "the busy haunts of men."'

In works of the 'subject' class no artist of the rival association could rise to the refinement of Cristall, or even emulate the delicate sweetness of Uwins. The class of figure-painting there represented was rather the correlative of Heaphy's, having more of a popular than an artistic aim. *Richter*, indeed, had some 'emblematical riddles,' but such titles as 'The Taylor's [*sic*] Bill,' 'A Visit to the Cunning Woman,' 'The Brute of a Husband,' indicate his most taking works. *Holmes* followed the same line in 'The Doubtful Shilling' (1810), a scene in a butcher's shop; and 'Miseries of Human Life,' wherein paterfamilias displayed his temper before an underdone joint. *Clennell*, too, was a prolific contributor, successful in various subjects of real life, from 'Greathead's Lifeboat, putting off to relieve a Vessel in Distress,' down to a 'Cellarman bottling Liquors.'

In 1810 the name of the Society underwent further modification, becoming the 'Associated *Painters* in Water-Colours.' In the next year, 1811, the numbers of exhibitors and of works exhibited are both somewhat diminished, and symptoms arise of financial difficulty; the following confession of failure being printed in the catalogue, by way of apology for the raising of its price from sixpence to a shilling: 'Some surprise having been expressed on account of the increase in the price of the catalogue of the present Exhibition, it is thought proper to state that the expenses of the Establishment, chiefly owing

<sup>1</sup> See Ackermann's *Repository*, iii. 423 and 432-435.

to its situation, greatly exceed those incurred by any other Body of Artists in the United Kingdom, and that these expenses will perhaps eventually rest upon no more than Eight Persons, who, sensible of the stimulus which this Society has given to the Arts, have, though at a great and certain loss, determined to continue its support, and to communicate *gratis* the advantages it affords to all Artists of real merit. They have, therefore, ventured to add to the price of their Catalogue, as a trifling means of lessening their expenses, and with the direct view of throwing a small part of the burthen they have spiritedly undertaken upon the liberality of the Public.' The list of contributors is at the same time further divided, nine out of the twenty exhibiting Members being placed in a distinct class under the title of 'Associated Members.' One of these, John Laporte, withdrew before the following season; but the remainder, who were still true to their colours in 1812, may be assumed to have been the eight spirited enthusiasts above referred to. These were: Henry Richter (President), W. J. Bennett (Treasurer), L. Francia (Secretary), David Cox, W. M. Craig, J. Huet-Villiers, J. Holmes, and W. Walker.

The exhibition of 1812 was the last expiring effort of the Bond Street association. To ensure popularity they employed fresh devices, even to the extent of abandoning the original lines upon which that society had been constituted. Oil paintings were admitted<sup>1</sup> as well as water-colour drawings, and the number of exhibitors was largely increased. Among the Members for this year was William Blake, who exhibited his extraordinary pictures of the 'Spiritual Forms' of Pitt<sup>2</sup> and Nelson, guiding Behemoth and Leviathan respectively, and his well-known 'Canterbury Pilgrims leaving the Tabarde Inn.' Richter had an oil picture of 'Christ restoring the Blind to Sight;' and Francia painted in the same medium a pendant to a Poussin which Sir Thomas Baring had exhibited in the British Institution. Holmes had a popular presentment of a refractory schoolboy, and Frederick Mackenzie continued a series of excellent studies for Ackermann's aquatint illustrations of Westminster Abbey.

In spite of these and other attractions, the exhibition was a commercial failure. The associated eight had been only too just in their anticipation of loss. Instead of a surplus of profit remaining, as in

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*, vii. 336.

<sup>2</sup> That of Pitt is now in the National Gallery, No. 1110.

the case of the old Society, for distribution among Members, there was not enough in hand to pay expenses; and, finally, down came the landlord, and seized the contents of the gallery in distraint of rent. The chief sufferer was David Cox, the whole of his year's drawings being taken from him and sold without compensation, which, even at the small prices they then fetched, inflicted a serious loss upon the rising painter.

Thus closed the short career of the 'Associated Artists' (or Painters) in Water-Colours.<sup>1</sup> Catalogues of the five exhibitions are to be found in the excellent Art Library at the South Kensington Museum. But as copies are very scarce, it has been thought expedient to compile, for the convenience of collectors and others, the following alphabetical list of the Members and Exhibitors, with an indication of the capacities in which they appear in the several exhibitions. Those whose names are in small capitals afterwards became Members, and those in italics Associates of our Society.

MEMBERS AND EXHIBITORS OF AND WITH THE  
*ASSOCIATED ARTISTS (OR PAINTERS) IN WATER-COLOURS.*

P signifies President; T, Treasurer; S, Secretary; M, Member; HM, Honorary Member; AM, Associated Member; E, Exhibitor; HE, Honorary Exhibitor.

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF				
	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812
Annis, W. . . . .	E				
<i>Barber, C.</i> . . . .			E	M	M
Barker, B. . . . .					M
Baxter, Thomas . . . .	E				
Baynes, James . . . .		E	E	M	M
<i>Bennett, William James</i> .	M	M	M	T	T
Betham, Miss . . . .				E	E
Blake, W. . . . .					M
Bone, Henry Pierce . . .	M				
Bourlier, Miss . . . .					E
Brighty, G. M. . . . .					E
Brooke, W. H. . . . .			E		E
Burden, J. . . . .					E
Cartwright, C. M. . . .					E
Cawse, J. . . . .			E		
Chalon, Alfred . . . .	M				
<i>Clennell, Luke</i> . . . .			M	M	M
Cockburn, R. . . . .					E
Compton, T. . . . .					E
Condé, P. . . . .				E	E
Coney, J. . . . .					E

<sup>1</sup> The sources of confusion arising from similarity of names and places appear to be inexhaustible. There was yet to be another body of 'Associated Painters in Water-Colours,' which held three exhibitions at 16 Old Bond Street in 1832-34. It was started by the late Mr. James Fahey, and was the origin of the 'New Society of Painters in Water-Colours,' now the 'Royal Institute.' (See *Athenæum*, 19 Dec. 1885, and *infra*.)



MEMBERS AND EXHIBITORS &c.—*continued.*

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF				
	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812
Cooper, G. . . . .					E
Cotman, J. S. . . . .			M	M	
COX, DAVID. . . . .		E	P	AM	AM
Craig, J. . . . .				E	E
Craig, W. M. . . . .		E	M	AM	AM
Dagley, R. . . . .	E				
De Barde, Chevalier . . . . .					E
DE WINT, P. . . . .	E	M			
Dighton, D. . . . .					E
Dinsdale, George . . . . .	E	E			
Dixon, J. . . . .				E	
Dixon, Robert . . . . .		E			
Douglass, J. . . . .					E
Fogg, A. . . . .					E
Foster, W. . . . .					E
Francia, L. . . . .	E		M	S	S
Gartside, Miss . . . . .	E				
Gauci, M. . . . .					E
Goddard, J. (Strand) . . . . .				E	
Goddard, J. (Upper Grosvenor Street) . . . . .				E	
Goodman, T. . . . .					E
Goodwin, E. . . . .	E	E	E		E
Green, James . . . . .	T	T	T		
Green, Mrs. . . . .	M	M	M		
Green, W. . . . .			E	E	
Hassell, J. . . . .					E
Hayter, G. . . . .					M
Hewlett, J. . . . .	E	E	E	M	M
Hoffland, T. C. . . . .					E
HOLMES, J. . . . .	E	M	M	AM	AM
Huet-Villiers, J. . . . .	M	M	M	AM	AM
Ibbetson, John . . . . .				HE	E
Jones, Mrs. S. . . . .					E
Kennion, Charles James . . . . .			E		
Laporte, John . . . . .	M	M	M	AM	E
Leschallas, J. . . . .	E	E			
Léveque, J. . . . .					E
MACKENZIE, FRED. . . . .				E	M
Martin, — . . . . .					E
Meen, Mrs. . . . .			M		
Morton, H. . . . .				E	E
NASH, FREDERICK . . . . .	E	M			
O'Neill, H. . . . .					E
Owen, Samuel . . . . .	M	M	M		
Papworth, John . . . . .	M	S		HM	HM
Pearson, William . . . . .	E	E			
Perkins, L. . . . .					E
Powell, Joseph . . . . .	E	E	E	E	E
PROUT, S. . . . .			M	M	M
RICHTER, HENRY . . . . .		E	M	P	P
Roberts, T. Santell . . . . .		E			
Robertson, Andrew . . . . .	S	M	M		
Robertson, C. . . . .		E			
Robertson, C. J. . . . .			E		
ROBSON, G. F. . . . .			E	M	M
Sass, Richard . . . . .		E			
Schetky, J. . . . .			E	M	M
Schetky, J. C. . . . .	E	E	E	M	M
Shepperson, M. . . . .			E	E	

MEMBERS AND EXHIBITORS &c.—*continued.*

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF				
	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812
Smith, Miss Emma . . .	M				
Smith, J. Clarendon . . .	E	M	M		
Smith, S. . . . .				E	E
Stanley, C. R. . . . .					E
Steele, Miss J. . . . .				E	M
Stephanoff, F. P. . . . .		E	E	M	
STEPHANOFF, JAMES . . .		E	E	M	M
Stump, S. J. . . . .					E
Thomson, D. . . . .	E				
Thomson, William John (or Thompson) . . . . .	M	M			
Tulloch, Mrs. . . . .		E	E		
Turner, C. . . . .	E				
Upham, — . . . . .					E
<i>Walker, William (Junior)</i> .	M	M	M	AM	AM
Watts, William Henry . .	M				
WESTALL, WILLIAM . . .	M	M			
Williams, H. W. . . . .	M	M			
Wilson, Andrew . . . . .	M	M	S		
Wood, William . . . . .	P	P	M		

Events had thus appeared to demonstrate that there were as yet no sufficient means of subsistence for two co-ordinate societies. Nor was the survivor so conscious of vitality as to neglect the opportunity now offered of engrafting upon its own system any profitable element which had appertained to the defunct association.

At the meeting at Hills's before referred to, on the 5th of November, 1812, it was first proposed to extend the scope of the exhibition in Spring Gardens, by inviting the co-operation of all painters in water-colours. But a resolution to this effect was rejected by a decisive majority, and a second proposal of a far more subversive kind was made and accepted. This was in fact to do what had been done by the rival Society in the last fatal year of its existence. A resolution was carried by a majority of ten to eight, 'that in future Members and Associates of this Society may send *Oil Pictures* as well as Drawings for Exhibition.' All the Members entitled to take part in the proceedings were present at this meeting, except Gilpin, Pocock, Pugin, Uwins, and Westall. At a further meeting, held at Glover's house in Montagu Square on the following Thursday, of eighteen Members, including Pugin and Uwins, this important subject was submitted to a long discussion, and the law admitting oil pictures was confirmed on a division, by the casting vote of Cornelius Varley. The result of this victory of the revolutionary

party was that *Chalon*, *Stevens*, and *Dorrell* immediately tendered their resignations. President *Reinagle*, also, in a letter (apparently not preserved) expressed his sentiments on the admission of oil pictures into the future exhibitions. They seem to have been unfavourable; for he took no further part in the affairs of the Society.

Four days after, however, on the 16th, there was another muster, at Glover's, of eighteen Members, who rescinded the above resolutions, and substituted the following: 'That the Society was established, as the preface to their first Catalogue declares, for the purpose of forming an Exhibition, which, consisting of "Water-Colour Pictures only, must from that circumstance give them a better arrangement and a fairer ground of appreciation than when mixed with Pictures in Oil." That the admission of Pictures in Oil would entirely change the character of the Society, and prove a manifest dereliction of that principle upon which they have hitherto uniformly laid their claim to the public support. That therefore the said Law admitting oil Pictures be rescinded. That, unconscious as the Society feel of any relaxation in their efforts to deserve public patronage, that patronage has been withdrawn from their two last Exhibitions. That, upon inquiry among the Members respecting the degree of support likely to be brought forward in their ensuing Exhibition, they cannot draw a hope of forming one that will in any degree vie with their last. That with such an evident decline in their Exhibition, the Society can see no other prospect than that of a serious deficiency in their receipts (those of the present year having done little more than cover their expences) and still further neglect from the Public. That therefore the Society do consider itself as dissolved on Monday, November 30th, its Anniversary, but that Members be summoned to attend on that day at Mr. Hills's at seven in the evening to receive the Report of their Committee, who are requested to be prepared with a final adjustment of the Society's affairs.'

Thus on its eighth birthday the young Society, which first drew breath at the Stratford Coffee House in Oxford Street on the 30th of November, 1804, met at the house of their secretary, Robert Hills, No. 15 London Street, Fitzroy Square, with the intent of deliberate suicide. This final meeting was attended by Wells, Nicholson, Pocock, Chalon, Pugin, Nash, C. Varley, Rigaud, Smith, De Wint, Havell, Uwins, Barret, Dorrell, Glover, Holworthy, J. Varley, Cristall,



Atkinson, Wild, and Hills. Havell took the chair, and for the long chain of resolutions above quoted was substituted the following short epitome of their result: 'That the Society, having found it impracticable to form another Exhibition of Water-Colour Paintings only, do consider itself dissolved this night.' The books, vouchers &c. were ordered to be retained for reference in the hands of Rigaud and Hills, the treasurer and secretary of the moribund Society, and, with an entry to that effect, its minutes come to an end.

We shall see, however, that the Society, taking indeed for a time a somewhat altered shape, was soon to spring again, like the Phoenix from its ashes. But certain of the old constituent elements were to form no part of the new body. A farewell has therefore to be taken of some of our present acquaintance, before again resuming the thread of the main history.

Eight years had now passed over the heads of the original Members of the Water-Colour Society, and the same number of summers and winters had had their effect, whether of ripening or decay, upon the artists and their art. Of the little group of founders, the names of Wells and Rigaud appear no more.

WELLS was now upwards of fifty. He had been an annual contributor to the gallery since 1805, to the number of about ninety works in all, but had exhibited no more than seven during the last three out of the five seasons. Besides subjects from his old sketches in Norway, and a few others from foreign lands (some doubtless from sketches by other travellers), his drawings include views in Kent, where he had the house at Knockholt in which the great Turner planned his *Liber*; and in Wales, where, during a professional tour, he made sketches that came into the collection of Mr. Hibbert (to whom the volume of Gainsborough fac-similes by him and Laporte was dedicated). There were also 'landscape compositions,' and a few rustic figures. He had at the same time continued to exercise his calling as a teacher. Upon the completion of Addiscombe College he was appointed the first Professor of Drawing to that institution, an office he retained for twenty years.

Wells was a man of industrious habits and fond of books. His latter days were passed in easy retirement, and he still enjoyed in quiet the partial practice of his art, at a cottage he purchased at Mitcham, where he lived for some years before his death. That

event took place there on the 10th of November, 1836, in the seventy-fourth year of his age.

RIGAUD had pursued his wonted path in the fields of fancy, exhibiting from three to ten drawings a year, amounting to fifty in all. One-fifth at least are sacred subjects, from the New or the Old Testament. The rest are for the most part illustrations of heathen mythology, and of the writings of Milton, Spenser and other British poets. A considerable number are from Ossian, and a few of the earlier, as already stated, are pure allegory. After severing from his former colleagues he showed his pictures again at the Royal Academy until 1815, and also at the British Institution and the Society of British Artists until 1852. In 1814 he exhibited a large picture of the 'Invasion of France' in the preceding year, with portraits of Wellington and his generals. Including the fifty drawings at our Society, his exhibited works amounted in number to 118.<sup>1</sup>

The date and place of his death, as of his birth, have not been ascertained. During his membership he had moved from Titchfield Street to 48 London Street, Fitzroy Square, and thence to 19 Upper Thornhaugh Street, Bedford Square, all in the same much frequented artist quarter of London. Rigaud's name appears once more, however, in the records of the Society, long after its last reconstruction, and in the days of its subsequent prosperity. It is recorded on the minutes of 3 August, 1849, that 'the Secretary read a letter from Mr. Rigaud, one of the original founders of the Society in 1804, stating his desire to be again recognized as a Member. The Secretary was directed to communicate to Mr. Rigaud that his letter had been heard with much interest, and with the respect due to a communication from the only surviving<sup>2</sup> original Member, but that according to the Laws it would be necessary for Mr. Rigaud to present some of his recent works for the consideration of the Society in the usual way of election, &c.' No further mention is made of the application.

Final notice has to be taken at this epoch of several other artists with whose names the reader is more or less familiar. *Reinagle*, *Chalon* and *Westall* took no part in the proceedings of the new

<sup>1</sup> Graves's *Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> This was an error. Cornelius Varley was the last survivor. And, moreover, Rigaud was not one of the ten actual founders, though he joined them immediately after their union took place.

Society. All three soon became Associates, and afterwards full Members, of the Royal Academy.

R. R. REINAGLE, who was President at the time of the dissolution, had been a steady contributor. He had exhibited sixty-two drawings, from first to last, all of them scenes in South Italy, or views in the English Lake district. No doubt they were carefully composed pictures. The artist, in describing them for the catalogue, is fond of specifying topographic particulars at more than usual length, and is careful to add the time of day at which the picture is supposed to be painted, as 'early in the morning,' 'forenoon,' 'noon,' 'sunset,' 'evening,' 'twilight,' and the like.

He was thirty-seven when his connexion with the Water-Colour Society ceased, and a great part of his artistic career was still before him. He was made an Associate of the Academy in 1814, and an R.A. in 1823, and he exhibited there between 1788 and 1857 no less than 244 works.<sup>1</sup> But an unfortunate event occurred in 1848, which cast a blot upon his reputation somewhat allied to that which has been recorded of J. C. Nattes. He was charged with having exhibited at the Royal Academy, and sold as his own, a picture painted by another hand (that of a young artist named Yarnold, of whom little is known), which he had bought at a broker's. He had indeed added some of his own handiwork, so much of it in fact that a living critic who remembers seeing it assures the writer that he considered it 'a complete Reinagle.' But his brother Academicians refused to admit that this had converted it into a work of his own, and he was obliged to retire from their body. Possibly an employment wherein he had been for some time engaged had induced an inverse habit of imitation which misguided the direction of his efforts. He had not been trying to engraft his own characteristics upon the works of other painters, but, on the contrary, training his hand to assume their several manners. He was, it is said, engaged at a daily fee by a picture dealer in Golden Square to restore old masters; and to have become an adept in putting in figures and cattle where required, touching up trees in Ruysdaels and Hobbemas, and to have been equal even to the completing of a Cuyp.<sup>2</sup> He was a skilful copyist of Gaspar Poussins in the National Gallery. He began on

<sup>1</sup> Graves's *Dictionary of Artists*.

<sup>2</sup> There is a story of his having overheard from his adjoining work-room a negotiation which ended in the purchase by Sir Robert Peel, on Lady Peel's persuasion, of a 700



a red ground, and finished the picture in a day or so.<sup>1</sup> Reinagle was then more than seventy years of age, but full of life and energy. He was a man of great natural ability and intelligence, with a taste for mechanics and inventions. Some years after he had left the Academy, he took to discoursing upon technical art, and gave some lectures at about half-a-crown admission in one of the show rooms of his friend Collard, the pianoforte maker, who was fond of pictures. Some maintained that he had been harshly treated by the Academy, and perhaps the opinion was held there. For a liberal allowance, made to him from the funds of that body, was continued to his death, which event occurred at Chelsea on the 17th of November,<sup>2</sup> 1862, at the age of eighty-seven.

Many of his landscapes have been engraved as book illustrations. From 1818 to 1828, and in 1830, the small pocket-book views in Peacock's *Polite Repository*, engraved by John Pye, are from R. R. Reinagle's designs. To W. B. Cooke's *The Thames* he supplied three of the plates, viz. 'Richmond,' dated 1 Feb. 1819; 'Sion House,' 1 Nov. 1821; 'Opening of Waterloo Bridge,' 1 Aug. 1822. In the *Bijou* for 1828 is 'Haddon Hall' ( $2\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{3}{8}$  in.), engraved after him by R. Wallis. In Tillotson's *Album of Scottish Scenery* (1834?) is 'Bothwell Castle,' engraved after him by E. Finden. In J. M. W. Turner's *Views in Sussex*, engraved by W. B. Cooke, 1819 (Part 1: no more published), the 'scientific and explanatory notices of the drawings' are by R. R. Reinagle.

J. J. CHALON was not received into the Academy until long after. He was made A.R.A. in 1827, and R.A. in 1841. In the mean time he exhibited works there of greater interest and importance than any he had sent to the Water-Colour Society, showing his versatility and power in painting both landscape and *genre*, and giving character to his figures as well as grouping them with skill. His works at the Society from 1806 to 1812 numbered fifty-one, mostly studies by the Thames or the Wye, with rustic figures to match. In 1809 he has a view of the fire at Drury Lane Theatre, seen from Westminster

guinea Hobbema in the conversion of which he had had a hand. Sir Robert, it is added, who was doubtful of it from the first, retained it in his gallery, though not on the line, as an interesting specimen of clever imitation.

<sup>1</sup> Three of his copies from the Rubenses at Antwerp were exhibited at 61 Pall Mall in 1819. See *Description*, 8vo. 1819. (*S., K. Lib.*)

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave. Ottley says 'December.'

Bridge. He gave to Greenwich Hospital a picture of 'Napoleon on board the *Bellerophon*, 1815,' and there is a large and striking oil painting of 'Hastings' by him at the South Kensington Museum. A set of *Twenty-four Subjects exhibiting the Costume of Paris*, 'the incidents taken from nature, designed and drawn on stone by J. J. Chalon,' small folio, was published in 1822, the dates on the plates being from May 1820. Most of them have a touch of humour.

Neither he nor his brother ever married, and their close companionship was only severed by John's death, which took place on the 14th of November, 1854, at the age of seventy-four, after a long illness, commencing with a paralytic seizure in 1847. His brother followed him in less than six years, dying at the same old house at Campden Hill where the two had passed together the autumn of their lives. They were regarded with much esteem, and their social qualities made them always welcome in the high professional circle in which they moved.

The name of the brothers Chalon must not be dismissed from this record without a memorandum of a pleasant club of which they are said to have been the founders, as they were for many years its life and soul, called *The Sketching Society*. It was not confined to Members of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, but the two bodies had Members enough in common to justify our regarding the former as in some measure an offshoot of the latter. The father of such Societies was that accredited to Girtin, of which an account has already been given. But that now spoken of was the most celebrated, and left the most enduring visible results. Earlier meetings of the same kind are spoken of as having taken place among the first Members of the Water-Colour Society, even from the time of its foundation in 1804, when 'a friendly society' is alleged to have met 'at the house of each in rotation, there to spend the evening in sketching, composition &c. &c.' To its meetings John Varley, it is said, though 'not one of the original members, was always invited, his talent as an artist, social qualities, and liberality in imparting information to his brother artists securing him always a welcome.'<sup>1</sup> Sketches by Havell and Atkinson also are believed to have been made on such occasions. Of this earlier body Crissall was a Member, and perhaps the originator. It was dissolved before the foundation of the more celebrated 'Sketching Society.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Art Union*, Jan. 1843.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from A. E. Chalon. J. J. J. MSS.

Though it was popularly known by the above name, the original title of the more celebrated club was 'The Society for the Study of Epic and Pastoral Design.' It originated with the two Chalons, and Francis Stevens, at whose house in Wigmore Street the first meeting was held on the 6th of January (Twelfth Night), 1808, when the plan of the Society was arranged. Its first members, besides the above three, were Turner (of Oxford) and Cornelius Varley (fellow-Members with them of the Water-Colour Society), with Thomas Webster, the architect, above mentioned as a companion of the Varleys in Wales in 1802, and Michael Sharp, a painter of portraits and popular subjects of a humorous class. To these at the second meeting was added Henry Pierce Bone, the portrait painter in enamel, above mentioned as one of the Associated Artists in 1808, who was then working chiefly in oil, and composing subjects from history and poetic fiction. The number was at first limited to eight, but two or three honorary Members were afterwards admitted, and the president for the evening had the privilege of introducing one visitor. The Society held weekly meetings during the winter season from October to April. At the anniversary they indulged in a little extra merriment, with toasts and speeches round a Twelfth cake, and at Midsummer they made an excursion together to visit 'something beautiful in nature or art, generally in both,' winding up the day with a dinner at Richmond or Greenwich, 'or some other country retreat.' The ordinary meetings, on the model of Girtin's Society, were held at each other's houses 'in rotation, the host of the evening being also president, and giving out the subject to be treated after tea and coffee. At eight o'clock they commenced operations, and at ten sat down to supper, a very simple meal at first, but as their appetites grew more fastidious it became so luxurious that laws were found necessary to restrain it. After supper the drawings were collected by the president, and put up separately for each member to criticize; and this was done with more candour and judgment than is usually found in professional critics. The drawing remained the property of the president of the evening (who by ancient law was not allowed to sell or otherwise dispose of them during his life without the consent of the Society), and thus ended a very agreeable and not ill-spent evening.'<sup>1</sup> In accordance with the name chosen for the

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Thomas Uwins, R.A.*, i. 163, 164.



Society, the subjects at first were 'chiefly from the ancient classics,' and, according to Pyne, 'the host prepared written extracts on separate slips' for the use of the members (whose school memories were perhaps not always to be trusted), besides providing, as in duty bound, 'paper strained on drawing frames, pencils, and sepia.'<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the scope allowed was almost unlimited. The Sketching Society had a bright existence, and lasted for forty years. It will be recurred to at a period of its greater fame.

One of the last drawings exhibited by WILLIAM WESTALL with the Water-Colour Society was a view of Port Jackson (in the gallery of 1812), doubtless that now at South Kensington with the date 1804. It forms one of the illustrations (engraved in line from his drawings) of the two quarto volumes containing the history of the ill-fated expedition to which he had begun life as draftsman. In the South Kensington Catalogue it is described as 'painted in the tinted manner, but with local colour used with opaque white sparingly for the high lights.' The book did not come out until 1814, when it was published with the title *A Voyage to Terra Australis*, 'undertaken for the purpose of completing the discovery of that vast country, and prosecuted in the years 1801, 1802, and 1803, in his Majesty's ship the *Investigator*, and subsequently in the armed vessel *Porpoise* and *Cumberland* schooner: with an account of the shipwreck of the *Porpoise*, arrival of the *Cumberland* at Mauritius, and imprisonment of the commander during six years and a half in that island; by Matthew Flinders, commander of the *Investigator*.' The following eminent landscape line engravers were employed therein in reproducing Westall's designs, namely: J. Byrne, S. Middiman, J. Pye, L. Scott, and W. Woolnoth. Captain Flinders died in July 1814, on the very day on which the book was published.<sup>2</sup> Westall was also employed by the Admiralty to make pictures from some of the views, which, being exhibited in 1812 at the Royal Academy, attracted great attention by reason of the absolute novelty of the subjects. In the same year he was made an Associate of the last-named body, his short connexion with the Water-Colour Society coming to an end at the same time.

It is, however, upon his water-colour drawings, rather than upon his oil paintings, that his reputation rests. Even the former are

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Penny Cyclopædia*.

chiefly known through the medium of engravings. 'His colouring,' says John Landseer the engraver,<sup>1</sup> 'was chaste, and his chiaroscuro harmonious, never flashing, or forced, or meretricious. The obtaining of fleeting popularity was quite out of his way: the artist was never obtruded before the demands of the subject: and hence Westall's *forte* was rather landscape portraiture than the treatment of ideal subjects; hence too, and from a corresponding want of critical discrimination on the part of the public, he was not as a landscape painter—one, besides, who had seen much more of the world than his academical brethren—duly appreciated, although justly valued by the judicious few.' Westall's professional career had scarcely passed its first stage when he joined and left the Water-Colour Society. According to Graves, seventy of his works are named in the catalogues of the Royal Academy, thirty in those of the British Institution, and seven in those of the Society of British Artists, between the years 1801 and 1849, the last of his life.

His integrity of character and unassuming manners secured him many valuable friendships, among them that of Sir George and Lady Beaumont, who when staying at Keswick were induced to seek him out on observing the merit of one of his Indian sketches at a stationer's shop there. His acquaintance with Professor Inman, astronomer to Flinders's expedition, led indirectly to one with the Rev. Richard Sedgwick, whose daughter Ann, the youngest sister of the eminent geologist, Professor Adam Sedgwick, he married on the 22nd of September, 1820.<sup>2</sup> She died in 1862.

The incidents of travel in his youthful days seem to have quenched any thirst for adventure that he may have possessed; for, with one exception, he passed the rest of his life in his own country, sketching chiefly, but not exclusively, in the fine scenery of the North of England, with which, after all he had seen, he was much impressed; and working up for the engraver both home and foreign studies, to be reproduced in popular series for many a year. The exception was a visit to Paris in the spring of 1847, the only time, strange to say, that he ever set foot on the continent of Europe. In the following autumn he met with an accident, which, though not immediately fatal, brought about his death on the 22nd of January, 1850, in his

<sup>1</sup> See *Art Journal*, April 1850, p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> The *Life of Sedgwick*, published in 1890, contains some landscape woodcuts and portraits from drawings by W. Westall, made in or before the year of his marriage.

sixty-ninth year, at St. John's Wood, where he had chiefly resided since his marriage.

The following works (mostly named in order of date) are illustrated, wholly or in part, by William Westall: *Views of Scenery in Madeira, the Cape, China, and India*, 1811; Ackermann's *History of Oxford*, 1813-14 (eight of the plates); Ackermann's *History of Cambridge*, 1815 (twenty-one of the plates); Ackermann's *History of Winchester, Eton, Westminster &c.*, 1816 (fifteen of the plates); Cooke's *Picturesque Views of the Southern Coast*, 2 vols. folio, 1826 ('Southampton,' 1 Jan. 1814; 'Netley Abbey,' 1 Oct. 1816); Pyne's *History of the Royal Residences*, 1819 (six of the plates); *Views of the Caves near Ingleton, Gordale Scar and Malham Cove in Yorkshire*, 4to, 1818 (twelve strongly shaded aquatints, 'drawn and etched by Wm. Westall, A.R.A.');

*A Series of Views of the Abbeys and Castles in Yorkshire*, 'drawn and engraved by W. Westall, A.R.A., and F. Mackenzie,' folio, 1820, letterpress by T. D. Whitaker, LL.D. (four of the eight aquatint plates<sup>1</sup>); Fourteen views of the *Lake and Vale of Keswick*, drawn and engraved by W. Westall, A.R.A., 4to, 1820; *Britannia Illustrata* (Kent), folio, Rodwell & Martin, 1822 (two lithographs, 'Canterbury from North Lane, 1 Feb. 1822;' and 'The Valley of Maidstone, looking towards Allingham, pub. Ackermann, 1823');

*Views on the Thames at Richmond, Eton, Windsor, and Oxford*, imp. 4to, 1824 (thirty-five large views lithographed by Hullmandel); *Views in Egypt and Nubia*, 4to, Murray, 1824-5, letterpress by Edw. J. Cooper, lithographs after drawings by S. Bossi, drawn on stone by W. Westall and J. D. Harding (those by Westall comprise landscape, architecture, and figures); *Picturesque Tour of the River Thames*, twenty-four coloured aquatints and two vignettes 'from original drawings taken on the spot by Wm. Westall and Samuel Owen,' folio, Ackermann, 1828 (twenty are by Westall, chiefly representing gentlemen's seats below Oxford, and the bridges in London); *Great Britain Illustrated*, 'a series of original views from drawings by William Westall, A.R.A., engraved by and under the direction of Edward Finden, with descriptions by Thomas Moule, 4to, Tilt, 1830' (the views, 161 in all, are placed two on a plate, dated 1828-30; editions dated 1832 and 1834, in two vols. 8vo, with 119 plates, bear the prefixed title 'Landscape Album').

To the steel-plate annuals and drawing-room books he also con-

<sup>1</sup> The British Museum has a unique copy with three unpublished plates.



tributed views, of which the following is a (probably imperfect) list : In the *Forget-me-not*, 1831, 'The Boa Ghaut ;' 1834, 'The Hong Merchant's Garden' (eng. by E. Goodall). In Tillotson's *Illustrations of Byron*, 3 vols. 4to, 1833-4, 'Cagliari, Sardinia ;' 'Newstead Abbey,' 'The Fountain at Newstead,' and 'Hucknell Church, Notts' (vignettes from 'Life and Works of Byron,' 12mo, Murray) ; and another 'Newstead Abbey' (from a sketch by C. Fellows, Esq.). In Tillotson's *Album of Scottish Scenery*, 'Woodstock' (from a drawing in the collection of George III.) and 'Nidpath Castle' (from a sketch by F. Skene), both engraved by E. Finden. In Tillotson's *New Waverley Album*, 'Windermere.' In the *Keepsake* for 1839, 'Byron contemplating the Coliseum.' Plates of this kind, however, appeared and reappeared, being made to do duty in successive publications, so that it is not easy to trace them to the first issue. For example, a print of the 'Fortress of Bowrie' (from a sketch by Captain Auber) in Emma Roberts's *Hindustan*, 2 vols. 4to, 1845, may also be found in Fisher's *Drawing-room Scrap Book* for 1836, itself a receptacle for plates already published elsewhere. Westall also did some work for the illustrated pocket-books.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Percy's *Sale Catalogue*, Lot 1431.

## BOOK V

### THE OIL AND WATER COLOUR SOCIETY

1813-1820

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## CHAPTER I

### A NEW SOCIETY

Reconstitution—Oil pictures, portraits, and sculpture admitted—Non-members allowed to exhibit—Claim of continuity—Changes of *personnel*—An independent water-colour exhibition—Final biographies of retiring Members—*Nicholson—Gilpin—Holworthy*.

IN strictness it may be insisted that by the end of the year 1812 the original Society of Painters in Water-Colours had ceased to exist. But the severance of its ties was not an absolute disruption. The Members of whom it had been composed divided themselves into two opposing factions, consisting respectively of those who favoured, and those who dissented from, the scheme of admitting oil pictures to the future exhibitions. The reforming party had already taken measures to carry into effect the resolutions which they had succeeded in passing on the 16th of November. For between that date and the final meeting of the 30th, namely on the 26th of that month, the following group had assembled at John Varley's house, in Broad Street, Golden Square, in order to form 'a society for the purpose of establishing an exhibition consisting of pictures in oil and water colours.' Nicholson took the chair, and, besides him, there were present, of the original set, Barret, Cristall, Havell, Holworthy, and John and Cornelius Varley; with Smith and Uwins, the Associate Fielding, and two artists who had not hitherto joined the Society, namely *James Holmes* and *John Linnell*. It was then and there resolved that the new body should consist of twenty Members, and that a select number of other artists should be specially invited to contribute to the exhibitions, but that the gallery should not be thrown open to the profession in general.

At another meeting, held two days after at the same place, it was resolved that, 'notwithstanding the promiscuous admission of works in oil and water colours,' it should 'always be considered a leading principle that in the arrangement of the exhibition the two classes be kept separate and distinct,' the centre of the room being devoted exclusively to paintings in water-colours. It was moreover agreed, according to a plan suggested by Glover, who had now joined the confederacy, that the arrangement and division should be so contrived that the public might be compelled to pass through the water-colour department before coming to the pictures in oil.<sup>1</sup>

On the 3rd of December, the old Society having in the mean time been formally dissolved, the promoters of the new one met again at Glover's in Montagu Square, and drew up the following list of Members, to constitute the 'Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours' :—

George Barret	John Glover
Joshua Cristall	Miss <i>Harriet Gouldsmith</i>
David Cox	William Havell
A. V. Copley Fielding	<i>James Holmes</i>
James Holworthy	Cornelius Varley
John Varley	William Turner
Francis Nicholson	Thomas Uwins
<i>John Linnell</i>	John Smith

On the 17th Nicholson was elected President ; Smith, Secretary ; Barret, Treasurer ; and Uwins, C. Varley, Glover and Cristall were chosen to constitute the first Committee. To the above Members were added by election on the 4th and 18th of February, 1813, respectively, *Frederick Mackenzie* and *Henry Richter*. The artists whose names are in italics had not been connected with the defunct Society ; and Fielding and Cox had been admitted thereto as Associates only, the latter not having even exhibited in its gallery.

Atkinson, Pugin, Nash, Scott, Clennell, and C. Barber now expressed themselves as favourable to the views of the reconstituted Society, and they all exhibited with it, though they did not join it as Members. Heaphy, Nash, and De Wint, as well as Clennell, had been invited to become Members ; but Heaphy held aloof altogether, and

<sup>1</sup> Such favouring of the water-colours afterwards gave rise to complaints of injustice to the oil. See Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1820), pp. 140, 170.



the other three contented themselves with aiding it as exhibitors only, as did also the former Members, Miss Byrne, Dorrell, Stevens, and Wild.

The promoters of the new Society proceeded to draw up a set of rules, retaining for the most part the original code, as far as it could be applied to the new conditions. They obtained a transfer of the intermittent lease of the Spring Gardens Gallery, took at a valuation the plant and fittings of their predecessors, and prepared to open an exhibition in the following spring. Invitations to contribute were sent to several artists of repute, as well as to their old colleagues, and the scope of the exhibition was extended so as to admit (with the oil paintings) not only portraits and miniatures, but a few designs in sculpture. Non-members were, as before, nominally restricted to five works apiece, but the number was afterwards extended to eight. Twenty-nine non-members co-operated with the eighteen Members, making forty-seven exhibitors in all ; and the number of works brought together was 250 of all kinds, the great majority being still by artists who had earned their chief celebrity as painters in water-colours.

Although the original Society had in reality been dissolved, it seems to have been the policy of the new one, by clothing itself as far as possible with the same external aspect, to hide the breach of continuity which had in fact occurred. The words 'oil and' are prefixed to those of 'water colours' on the title-page of the catalogue ; but in typographical details and general appearance it is similar to those which had gone before it, and the exhibition of 1813 is boldly numbered as 'The Ninth.' Moreover, an advertisement is there inserted, in the following words, which will not bear a close comparison with the records contained in the minute-books, from which chiefly the foregoing account has been compiled : 'THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS stimulated by Public Encouragement, and gaining Confidence from Success, have ventured this year on a considerable extension of their Plan. Pictures in Oil and in Water Colours, Portraits, Models, and Miniatures are admitted into the present Exhibition ; and should these increased efforts receive from the Public that liberal support which has always accompanied the former exertions of this Society, every Year may produce fresh sources of Amusement, and each succeeding Exhibition become more worthy of Approbation and Patronage.' Notwithstanding the proposed contrivances to ensure the prominence of the water-colour drawings,

and their due presentation to an eye unfatigued with the glare of oil, there is no distinction at all in the catalogues between the two classes, so that it is impossible to tell therefrom in which material any given work was painted.<sup>1</sup>

Under the above conditions, exhibitions were held for the next eight years, 1813 to 1820, in this 'great room' at Spring Gardens. They constitute the second period, upon which we now enter, in the annals of our present history. It will be narrated how, at the close of that period, the Society reverted to the original scheme, and became once more a body of painters in water-colours only.

The following further changes in the *personnel* of the Society took place before the close of the first year. *Nicholson*, notwithstanding the prominent part he had taken in forming and inaugurating the new Society, tendered his resignation in the November of 1813, and sent nothing to the exhibition of the following year. He was, however, specially permitted to exhibit as a 'Member' in 1815, after which year his name disappears from the catalogues. *Richter*, too, threw up his Membership in December 1813, but gave help for some time after as an occasional Exhibitor, and eventually, as we shall see, rejoined the Society. Two new Members, however, were elected in the same month, namely, George Fennel *Robson*, and the former President of 1805, William Sawrey *Gilpin*. But the latter name is attached to five drawings only in 1814, with 'no effects' in 1815, and then disappears altogether.

There was a rule (not always strictly enforced) that every Member should contribute one work at least to each exhibition. In 1814, *Holworthy*, having failed to do so, was called upon to explain, and thereupon resigned. In the catalogue for the same year we find the name of William *Havell* transferred from the list of Members to that of Exhibitors. After 1816 it is not to be found again for a long series of years. In 1827 he returned to the Society for a short period. But *Nicholson*, *Gilpin*, and *Holworthy* were leaving, or shortly to leave, it for good and all.

We are left in the dark as to the circumstances of *Nicholson's* retirement, and it is somewhat of a surprise to come upon his name in a group of separatists from the body of his old colleagues. It seems that, after the abandonment by the original Society of their

<sup>1</sup> In 1813, Glover, Hills, Turner, Havell, and J. Varley had oil pictures. (Papworth MS.) In 1818 about half were in oils. (*Literary Gazette*.)

attempt to maintain an exclusive exhibition of water-colour drawings, an independent effort was made to set on foot an annual gathering of the kind; and with this view a gallery was opened 'at the Public Room, New Bond Street' (No. 23), in 1814, with an exhibition of 193 'Paintings in Water-Colours,' which the promoters declared to be 'unconnected with any Society or Establishment whatever.' Several of the old Society's Members (including its Presidents for 1813 and 1814) were among the contributors. *F. Nicholson* had 21 works, *F. Nash* 11, *S. Rigaud* 9, and *J. Smith* 3. Some, whose names had been included with the 'Associated Artists' in 1808, were also of the number. A second exhibition opened there in 1815, on the 3rd of May, with 205 works, including 3 by *Nicholson*, 3 by *Nash*, and 4 by *Wild*. Several artists who had yet to win their spurs as Members of our own Society, were contributors to these exhibitions.<sup>1</sup> But it was the same old story. Already it was found necessary to eke out the attraction by admitting some oil paintings, together with a few 'old masters;' and we hear nothing more of the venture.<sup>2</sup>

FRANCIS NICHOLSON, at the time of his retirement, had exhibited 277 works on the Society's walls, in numbers varying from 13 (in 1815<sup>3</sup>) to 41 (in 1809); having been absent but one season, that of 1814. The subjects embraced views among the mountains and lakes of Wales and Scotland, Yorkshire abbeys, Chedder rocks, and hills and vales of Lynton and Lynmouth; with a shipwreck or two at Scarborough, and, latterly, a few foreign views, done from sketches by amateurs. Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart.; Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Bart., and John Thornton, Esq., supplied some of these, Nicholson's original study of nature, like that of most of his brother landscape painters in the war-time, having been confined to his own well-stored country. There are two Irish views in 1812 and 1813, from sketches by Sir Thomas Gage, Bart. The artist himself is not known to have been in Ireland; but his son Alfred, who, after serving in the navy, followed his father's profession as a water-colour painter

<sup>1</sup> *Samuel Prout* had 10 works in 1814, and 18 in 1815. To the first exhibition *G. F. Robson* contributed 2; and in the second *J. D. Harding* had 5, and *H. Gastineau* 4.

<sup>2</sup> Catalogues of the two exhibitions are preserved in the Library at the South Kensington Museum under the William Smith bequest.

<sup>3</sup> As one (and one only) of these thirteen works is described in the catalogue as 'painted in water-colours,' it is to be inferred that the remaining twelve were in oil.



and teacher of drawing, made many sketches in the Emerald Isle, during a residence there of three or four years commencing in 1813.<sup>1</sup>

John Landseer, writing in 1808, observes of our painter's art: 'Mr. Nicholson generally chooses to paint romantic rocks and waterfalls and lake scenery, of which there are several pictures in the present Exhibition, and in our opinion his generalized style is far better suited to such subjects than to subjects where (as in Gothic architecture) portraiture in detail is more imperiously required.'<sup>2</sup>

Pyne, writing in 1823, records, in words before quoted, his observations on the influence of Nicholson's drawings upon the landscape school of his day, when the results of his new technical processes came to be displayed. And the critic adds that although each professor 'continued to pursue *his own particular style*, yet the example of such works, exhibiting, as they did, powers and capacities in the materials with which they were wrought, that had been developed by' Nicholson 'alone, acted as a stimulus to their exertions.'<sup>3</sup> Nicholson himself was fond of strong, bold effects of light and shade. He considered Claude's gradation of light 'tame and almost insipid,' preferring the sudden gleams, or 'accidents' as he called them, of G. Poussin, Rembrandt, Rubens, and Wilson. The chiaroscuro of Reynolds, Wilson, Barret, and Gainsborough, was, in his opinion, carried, in principle and practice, to a greater degree of perfection than was ever attained by the Venetian painters. These views appear in an elaborate treatise on his art, which he published after ceasing to be a Member of our Society, under the following title: *The Practice of Drawing and Painting Landscape from Nature in Water-Colours*, 'exemplified in a series of instructions calculated to facilitate the progress of the learner, including the elements of Perspective, their application in sketching from nature, the explanation of various processes of colouring, for producing from the outline a finished picture, with observations on the study of nature, and various other matters relating to the Arts. By Francis Nicholson. London, 1820.' The author dedicated his book to the Hon. Mrs. Fortescue, with a compliment to her proficiency in art, and thanks for 'numerous favours and acts of kindness from her and her family.' So he was still in the enjoyment of high patronage among amateurs of the brush.

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>2</sup> *Review of Publications in Art*, p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 30, 31.

With the exception of eighteen, noted by Graves between 1789 and 1833 at other galleries, Nicholson confined the exhibition of his works to that of the Water-Colour Society. But he continued to teach, by example as well as by precept. His treatise passed quickly through several and enlarged editions; and he took advantage of the newly invented process of lithography to put a large number of drawings, several hundred it is said, upon stone, which, serving as 'copies' for students, have been thumbed and torn and worn away like old school books, and consequently become rare. Among his views so executed are eighty-one large lithographs from *Sketches of British Scenery*, obl. folio, 1821, and *Six Views of Scarborough*, imp. folio, 1822.

Besides the earlier ones already mentioned, engravings after Nicholson's drawings may be found in the following works: In the *Beauties of England and Wales* are 'Porchester Castle,' 1805; two views of 'Netley Abbey,' 1805, 1806, both from sketches by Dayes; 'St. Vincent's Rocks, near Clifton,' 1806, and 'Prudhoe Castle,' 1811. In Havell's aquatints of *Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Seats* is 'Pantheon, Stourhead Gardens' (Mr. Colt Hoare), 1817. In the *Northern Cambrian Mountains*, folio, 1820, are 'Rhaiadry y Wennol' (No. 31) and 'Denbigh Castle' (No. 36), both highly coloured aquatints, by T. Fielding, 1 May, 1820. In *Facsimiles of Water-Colour Drawings*, published by Bowyer, 1825, are 'Robin Hood's Bay' (Pl. 4), 'Shipwreck near Scarborough' (Pl. 7), 'Dropping Well, Knaresborough' (Pl. 9).

'Eminent as was his position as an artist,' says Ottley, 'he was also distinguished for his practical knowledge in mechanics, music, optics, chemistry, which led him often to try experiments, often highly interesting in their result. It was his practice to paint upon unbleached paper, and to use water-colours, the durability of which his experience had established. Some of his experimental drawings after thirty or forty years' probation remained as fresh and full in colour as when they were first executed.'<sup>1</sup>

The latter years of Nicholson's life present an agreeable picture of ease and enjoyment of a competency acquired by successful industry. Long retired from professional practice, he continued to use the pencil for his own pleasure, and to amuse himself with his trials of colours and vehicles. He had had the satisfaction of seeing

<sup>1</sup> *Supplement to Bryan's Dictionary of Painters &c.* (1876).

some at least of his talent inherited in another generation. But the picture is saddened by the death in 1833, after a painful illness, of the son already mentioned. A daughter exhibited two Scotch landscapes at Spring Gardens in 1815; and another son appears to have been the draftsman of two series of lithographs entitled respectively, *Six Views of Picturesque Scenery in Goathland*, folio, 10 Oct. 1821; and *Six Views of Picturesque Scenery in Yorkshire*, 10 Sep. 1822, published at Malton.<sup>1</sup>

Nicholson continued to reside in Upper Titchfield Street till 1806, from which date till 1810 his address is 1 Great Chesterfield Street, Marylebone. In 1811 he moves to 52 Charlotte Street, Portland Place, where he continued to reside until his death there on the 6th of March, 1844, at the ripe age of fourscore and ten. From internal evidence, the autobiographical notes so largely quoted from in an earlier part of this history appear to have been written during the last five years of his life. They would thus indicate a remarkable retention of memory.

The highest price recorded by Mr. Redford in his *Art Sales* for one of Nicholson's drawings is 101*l.* 17*s.* for a 'Stirling Castle' (13 × 18 in.), painted in 1806, and sold in 1869 at that price.

Of WILLIAM SAWREY GILPIN there is little more to relate. He exhibited in all eighty-three works with the Society, including five in 1815, in annual numbers of from three (in 1809) to twenty (in 1805) during his membership. In his post of drawing master at the Military College he was transferred with the college from Great Marlow to Sandhurst, where he was residing in 1814 and 1815. Except a few early sketches at the Lakes of Killarney, his subjects are chiefly confined to ordinary views about his home on the Thames, and in Kent, Surrey, and Hampshire, and the Isle of Wight, with a few about Cheltenham and in Glamorganshire. After leaving the Society he devoted himself to the art of landscape gardening, both in its theory and practice, and 'obtained almost a monopoly' therein. 'His principal works were in Ireland at Crum Castle, Enniskillen Castle, and the seats of Lord Cawdor and Lord Blayney; in England he laid out the gardens of Dansfield, near Henley-on-Thames, and at Sir E. Kerrison's seat near Hoxne, Suffolk.'<sup>2</sup> He moreover published

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Percy's MS. Catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.



a volume entitled *Practical Hints upon Landscape Gardening ; with some Remarks on Domestic Architecture, as connected with Scenery*, 8vo, London, 1832, with lithographic illustrations. He married Elizabeth Paddock, by whom he left two sons. His death, at the age of eighty-one, occurred in 1843, at Sedbury Park, in Yorkshire.

JAMES HOLWORTHY had not been a large exhibitor. His name had appeared in each year's catalogue, but the total number of the works to which it is appended is only twenty-nine. They represent picturesque stock subjects in England and Wales, ruined castles predominating. Redgrave says that he continued to practise in London up to 1822. On the 15th of October, 1821,<sup>1</sup> he married, at Hastings, Miss Anne Wright, an artist daughter of Richard Wright, M.D., who was an elder brother of the painter Joseph Wright, commonly called 'Wright of Derby.' He then retired into the country, having purchased some property called the Brookfield estate, near Hathersage, in the county of Derby, where he built Brookfield House. There was no issue of the marriage, which was severed by his death on the 10th of June, 1841, followed in the next year by that of his widow. His grave is at Kensal Green.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Redgrave assigns the date 1824 to this event.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Life and Works of Wright of Derby*, by William Bemrose, folio (1885), p. 4.

## CHAPTER II

## MEMBERS OF THE OLD SOCIETY

Retrospect in 1820—Further biographies of old Members—*Havell—Pocock—J. Smith—Barret—Cristall—Glover—Hills.*

THE reader being reminded of the division of this history, so far, into two periods of eight years, the first from 1805 to 1812, when the annual exhibitions were confined to paintings or drawings in water-colours ; the second from 1813 to 1820, when oil pictures and other works of art were admitted also, and of the fact above stated, that at the end of the second period the Society reverted to the scheme adopted during the first ; and a more detailed account being for the present deferred of the circumstances which led to and attended this reform ; the last-mentioned date will now be taken as a convenient standpoint from which to cast a retrospective glance at the proceedings of the Society, and the doings of its Members and other Exhibitors, to that epoch.

In this year 1820, Pocock was seventy-nine, and 'Warwick' Smith seventy-one. Barret, Cristall, and Glover were each fifty-three years old, and Hills was fifty-one. John Varley was forty-two ; Pugin and Dorrell were nearly as old ; and Wild, Nash, and Uwins followed at about thirty-eight. Then came a younger and rising race of artists, some of them not hitherto mentioned. De Wint, Cox, and Prout were about six years younger than Varley ; and Fielding, Robson, and Turner, younger again by a somewhat shorter interval, the last-named being thirty-one. Three years before this, Pocock had finally ceased to exhibit, and Glover had abandoned the Society, under circumstances yet to be related. Uwins, too, had retired the year after, and Dorrell's name had appeared for the last time in the catalogue, in 1819. Havell, as aforesaid, had given up his membership in 1813, and exhibited nothing since 1816. The biographies of these first Members have now to be continued to the epochs named.

WILLIAM HAVELL had not now taken his final leave ; but the Society was in another phase of its history when he afterwards re-joined it. Since he had been received as one of its first Members, he had not only justified his position by the quality of his contributions, but had taken a place in the leading rank as an artist in landscape. His compositions, says Pyne, 'were much admired even in the first year's exhibition in Brook Street, whilst he was yet a very young man. He had already proved himself an attentive observer of nature for his landscape subjects were well chosen, and truly characteristic of English scenery. . . . Havell, however, was not contented with an occasional trip from London, to snatch a new hint, by hasty sketching from real scenes, to work into pictures at his return, as many had done : he wisely determined to remove to some picturesque spot, where he might sojourn awhile, and at leisure contemplate nature under the changes of each season, and attired in all the varieties of her rich wardrobe. He selected the beautiful region of the lakes in Cumberland, and took up his quarters in a little town in the very bosom of romantic nature. . . . Here he studied for two years, when he returned to London with rich stores of lake and mountain scenery, from which for several seasons, he enriched the exhibition, added to his own fame, and contributed to raise the general reputation of his department of art.' It was in 1807 that he thus went to Westmoreland, to reside for more than a year in a cottage at Ambleside. 'We remember, among these Cumberland views,' continues his old friend and colleague, 'some which were remarkable for depth and harmony of effect, and nearer to reality than the compositions of any of his compeers. Indeed, the richness and intensity of colouring in some of his happiest works suffered but little in comparison with paintings in oil, a consequence that resulted from his continual practice of painting his effects on the spot. These drawings, though broad in effect and bold in execution, yet were highly wrought, being the result of careful study and much labour,' and possessed qualities of richness and harmony 'only to be effected by reiterated touching, tinting, and glazing.'<sup>1</sup>

Between 1805 and 1812 Havell exhibited 114 drawings at the old Society ; and at Spring Gardens in 1813-16 he had twenty-two works, one or more of which were in oil, making 136 in all. After the first year or two, his views in Wales are gradually superseded by

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 193.



those at the English Lakes ; which, alternating with scenes on the Thames, chiefly about Caversham and Henley, and his native town of Reading, interspersed with a few rustic figure groups, form nearly all the subjects of his pencil during this period. Some of these treatments of home subjects in his early time are perpetuated in *A Series of Picturesque Views of the River Thames* 'from the Drawings of William Havell ; Dedicated to the Commissioners of the Thames Navigation, by their humble servant Robert Havell.' Published 1 May, 1812. It contains twelve coloured aquatint plates (14 x 20 in.) and a vignette of the source, engraved by R. and D. Havell.

Two or three exhibited studies of sea-boats and fishermen, and a view of the castle, in 1812-13, tell of a sojourn at Hastings, where a married sister resided, and where he sketched with David Cox in the former of those years. Havell was then, says Cox's biographer, 'beginning to turn his attention to oils.'<sup>1</sup>

Of his success in that material we have the recorded opinion of Uwins, who, in describing to a friend the exhibition of 1815, wrote thus of one of his pictures, which, strange to say, was rejected by the Directors of the British Institution : 'There is one thing which will excite a great bustle among artists and amateurs, it is a most extraordinary picture of Havell's, in which he has painted sunshine so near to truth that it absolutely makes the eyes ache to look at it. The artists are all alarmed, and the patrons stand aghast ; but Havell, strong in the power of genius, goes on in spite of all the world combined.'<sup>2</sup> The picture was, doubtless, one of 'Walnut-gathering at Petersham, near Richmond, Surrey,' of which the painter is said to have been very proud, considering that it even surpassed the work of Turner.

During his last five years in England, Havell had been engaged in furnishing a series of small landscape designs, drawn for the most part in sepia, for the frontispieces and monthly headings of the pages of a little annual pocket-book, known as 'Peacock's *Polite Repository*.' For a long course of years the execution of the plates for this and similar works<sup>3</sup> gave constant employment to the talent of the late John Pye, the eminent landscape engraver. A collection of more than 1,300 fine proof impressions of plates of this class, exquisitely

<sup>1</sup> Solly's *Life of Cox*, pp. 25, 26. The writer says that Cox 'used to boast that he painted a sunrise in June, and then awoke his friend by flinging pebbles at his window to show what he had done while the other slept.'

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 37, 38.

<sup>3</sup> There are one or more after Havell in the *Royal Repository*, published by Suttaby.

engraved by him or under his direction, was in 1882 presented by his daughter to the British Museum, where they may be studied with much profit. None among them are more beautiful than those designed by William Havell. When that artist left England, after supplying the volumes for the years 1813 to 1817, the pencil of Reinagle was, as before mentioned, employed for some years, in fact until Havell's return in 1829. Often, in these miniature topographical prints, Pye, to use his own homely expression when speaking of the engraver's task of so translating an inartistic sketch as to make it presentable to the eye, had 'to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear.' But this was not the case with the designs of his 'old friend William Havell.' Havell, like Pye, was a devoted admirer of Turner. 'The knowledge,' said he, 'which Girtin and Turner had acquired of sunlight was so completely developed in their works, that it seemed to have been held in hand, and thrown into the subject at pleasure.' And sometimes in their joint management of the chiaroscuro of these pocket landscapes the two devotees scarcely fall short of the great object of their common admiration.

To this period belong also some contributions by William Havell to a set of coloured aquatints engraved by Robert Havell, entitled *Picturesque Views and characteristic Scenery of British Villas*, 'in imitation of drawings of views of the principal Palaces, Noblemen's Mansions, and Gentlemen's Seats throughout Great Britain' (Colnaghi & Co.). This work was managed by Britton.<sup>1</sup> In Cooke's *Picturesque Views on the South Coast* there is a plate of 'Hastings,' dated 1816, after a drawing by Havell now at the South Kensington Museum.

NICHOLAS POCOCK, though he would not remain a Member in the new régime, had sent drawings annually to the mixed exhibition until 1817, in which year his address is entered in the catalogue as No. 36 St. James's Parade, Bath, instead of the old familiar residence in George Street, Hanover Square, where he had remained since he there played his part in the creation of the old Society. After the last-mentioned date, his name appears no more.

He had continued to illustrate his country's naval annals; some of the drawings of his latest years depicting scenes in the renewed

<sup>1</sup> Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1816). Other artists were employed on the work when William Havell went abroad. It then appeared as *Picturesque Views of Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Seats*, 1823, aquatinted by R. Havell and son, wherein five of the plates are after W. Havell.

sea-struggle with France, and latterly with the American navy. This blood-stained chapter of European history had at length closed. And Pocock, in his last year of exhibiting, ends a list of 182 works by depicting a calm at Broadstairs, with three other scenes on his native shore, in none of which is there an enemy to be seen, save 'winter and rough weather.' He himself was very soon to leave this mortal scene.

Besides these works, he had exhibited 113 at the Royal Academy and 25 at the British Institution, making 320 in all. There are two of his sea-fights at Hampton Court, and one is at Greenwich Hospital; but these are oil pictures. Many of his marine subjects have been engraved; and he designed the illustrations to Miller's edition of Falconer's *Shipwreck*, 8vo, 1811. These are engraved by Fittler, and comprise four full plates and six vignettes.

Old 'Warwick' SMITH had been a constant exhibitor since he first had courage to come into the field in 1807; though it was said that, as in Gilpin's case, the competition to which his drawings were so exposed had not increased his fame as an artist. In earlier days, when they were a novelty, their colouring had astonished the public, and fascinated all who saw them.<sup>1</sup>

'But,' writes Nicholson,<sup>2</sup> 'the case was greatly altered on the appearance of his works in Brook Street by comparison with others. Francia the artist said to me, "These cannot be by the Smith who has so high a reputation." I assured him they were by no other. It was ill for him when the public expressed the same surprise as Francia had done. He could not alter his method of practice, and probably thought it beneath him to do so, or go on like others in the endeavour to give strength of effect and depth of colour. He stood still, and was soon left behind.' Thus we hear little of his works as adding to the attractions of the gallery. Nevertheless he had had 142 there in all, varying in annual number from two to twenty-four. We have scarcely any information about him except what may be learnt from catalogues. From these we gather that for the first two or three years his stock of Italian sketches had afforded him ample material, but that, being debarred during the war time, like our other artists, from renewing that stock by further trips abroad, he followed their

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Joseph Farington, R.A., to Colonel Machell, quoted by Nicholson, J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



example by sketching in his native land. In 1810, only two out of his fourteen drawings are from Italy. North Wales subjects are numerous, appearing nearly every year. By 1811 he has been in Devon and Somerset, painting at Clovelly and about Exmoor. It is evident, however, that he took the earliest opportunity to renew his acquaintance with foreign scenes when the Continent was reopened to travellers. In 1814 his views are all again from Italy or from Switzerland and France.<sup>1</sup> But they probably had not the freshness and originality of the sketches he made while touring as a young man in the last century with the Earl of Warwick. After the last-mentioned date, his annual exhibits are nearly all foreign views. He was, however, getting old and less active, and they drop to an average of five.

Smith had taken a leading part in the Society's affairs ; had been President in 1814, 1817, and 1818 ; Secretary in 1816 ; and Treasurer in 1819. He had resided at 7 St. George's Row, Oxford Turnpike, till 1814 ; and from 1815 had been at 25 Bryanston Street, Portman Square.

An Exhibitor in 1816, 1819, and 1820, named G. or G. W. Smith, also gave the latter address, and sent eleven views in all, chiefly from France and Switzerland.

The ways of GEORGE BARRET were so unassuming, and his life had been so quietly industrious, that his name has not come before us so often or so conspicuously as it deserves. Nevertheless he was a representative man among the old water-colour painters. The series of unpretending views on the Thames and in the home counties, with a few in Wales, which he had exhibited year by year since the founding of the Society, showed that the ' painter's feeling ' within him (wherein he declared everything lay)<sup>2</sup> was based on a deep sense of the daily beauty of nature, and the restful light that shines with impartial ray on homely, as on the most romantic, scenes. He had continued, as indeed he did to the end, to wrestle with poverty ; but, while working thriftily to support a wife and family, he ever thought more of putting gold into his drawings, than of the amount of the

<sup>1</sup> Among them are two views of Elba, the place of Bonaparte's short banishment ; and the catalogue for 1814 advertizes as ' in the press,' *The Journal of a Tour through the Island of Elba*, by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, Bart. Illustrated by a selection of views engraved in the line manner, from drawings by John Smith, who resided some time on the Island.' (Royal 4to, 8 prints, 6 x 9 inches.)

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 491.

precious metal for which those drawings might be exchanged. He had continued to reside in the same suburban quarter (from 1805 to 1809 at 20 Lisson Green, and then at '17 Devonshire Place,' near Paddington Green'); and the subjects of his later exhibited works seemed to show that his sketching-ground was narrower than it had been. Scenes from Wales become less common, and there is a growing tendency to take the effect itself as his motive rather than the local subject treated thereunder. The titles 'Morning,' 'Evening,' 'Moonlight,' 'Storm breaking off,' and the like, indicate the approach of a period of his art which comprised some of his finest works of this kind. But it was not necessary for him to travel far in search of effects. It was no doubt his own experience that prompted him, when, in a practical work on painting which he published a few years before his death, he advised students to watch the sunsets over the Paddington Canal from the bridge at Maida Hill. Possibly the two drawings in 1820, to which lines from Thomson are appended in the catalogue, called 'Evening' and 'The Harvest Moon,' may both have been executed in performance of the conditions of the year's premium allotted to him as hereinafter to be mentioned. The number of his works in the galleries since 1805 had been 198, the average being about a dozen a year.

Some of JOSHUA CRISTALL'S lines of life still ran parallel to those of Barret. Neither could ever do much more than make both ends meet by following a class of art in which chaste and somewhat ideal sentiment was the pervading motive, however much their works may have been admired by *cognoscenti*. They had been neighbours in Paddington, whither the former had come to reside in 1810 or 1811. He, too, was married,<sup>2</sup> but had no family. His wife, whose maiden name was Cozens, had led a life not devoid of adventure. She was partly brought up in France, having in her girlhood exchanged places

<sup>1</sup> Devonshire Place appears to have been at Maida Hill, forming part of the Edgware Road, in which Barret's house was numbered 162 in 1831. From 1836 the address took the form '162 Devonshire Place, Edgware Road, Paddington.' The numbers are now again altered.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. M'Ketchnie in her MS. supplies the following bit of gossip. She says: 'He had several times thought of marrying, and went so far with one lady, a Miss Trotter, who kept a school, that he even took apartments in the Strand, furnished them, and then changed his mind! The lady threatened an action; they compromised; he gave her the furniture and 50*l.*, which sum he did not then possess. His long-tried friends the Lacklans again helped him in this trouble. She afterwards married a doctor and kept her carriage, but did not live long to enjoy it.'

with a young French lady, whom her own family received in England, while she went to dwell in that of a French Marquis at the other's home. There she was caught in a wave of the Revolution, and thence carried off and detained for some time in durance vile; and on her release, she had to make her way home as best she could from the then deserted château of her yet more unfortunate host.

Mr. and Mrs. Cristall's marriage took place in the summer of 1812.<sup>1</sup> Cristall had then been residing for about two years at Maida Hill, Edgware Road. Now he removed to the Manor House, Paddington Green, the residence of his wife's aunt, who kept a large school there, and by whom Miss Cozens had been brought up, when left an orphan in early life.<sup>2</sup> After this date we find for several years so many views on the south coast of the Isle of Wight, that one may hazard a conjecture that this was one of his favourite resorts. And we know he had a good friend and patron there in Mr. James Vine of Puckester, a Russian merchant, who possessed many of his drawings.

The Cristalls are said to have paid a visit to Paris, possibly in 1814 or 1815; but the gallery catalogues contain no evidence of travel beyond our artist's native shore. Mrs. M'Ketchnie writes: 'He went to Scotland about 1815, I think. He had great enjoyment in this tour. The Scotch peasantry he found to possess so much of the Grecian elegance and costume.'<sup>3</sup> From 1816 his address changes to No. 2 (Lower) Lisson Street, New Road, Marylebone; and there he was living and painting and taking pupils in 1820. A few classical compositions for their use were, it is said, published by him at Lisson Street with the date 1816.<sup>4</sup>

But the titles in the gallery lists foreshadow a change which was shortly to take place in his habits of life. Views on the Wye are mingled with those in the Isle of Wight; and, after sending a single portrait in 1816, and another in 1819, he presents us with no less than four in 1820. It was, indeed, neither as a master of landscape, poetic as his treatment thereof always was, nor of portraiture, that he stood

<sup>1</sup> The above account is that given to Mr. Jenkins by Miss E. Cristall, 20 May, 1851. It mainly agrees with that of Messrs. Redgrave in *Century of Painters*, i. 511, except that they date the marriage a year later. Mr. Tregellas, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, says that Cristall married 'an accomplished French widow (a Mrs. Cousins), a lady of some fortune.'

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 511.

<sup>3</sup> There is a sketch in the Scottish National Gallery inscribed 'J. C. 1818. Loch Katerine.' No. 214.

<sup>4</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.



on his own peculiar ground. It was as a figure painter of pure classic taste that he has been introduced to the reader ; and this character he had maintained, less perhaps in subjects taken directly from the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, than by developing a style of treatment of rustic figures in real life, which contrived to elevate the subject without an addition of false sentiment, and out of the picturesque to evolve the beautiful. Among the 209 works which he sent to our gallery between 1805 and 1820, a large proportion are single studies of the class last above mentioned, of fisher folk, cottage maidens, shepherds and gleaners, and girls at the well. 'Simplicity of character,' writes Pyne in 1814, 'united with grandeur of style, distinguish these designs.'<sup>1</sup> The classic feeling which runs through all Cristall's work is well illustrated by the following comparison a few years later in a contemporary review : 'Poussin found the sculpture of the ancients more beautiful and grand than what he could see in nature. He therefore in too many instances painted *sculpture*. Cristall learned to see nature in the same point of view in which the ancients contemplated her.'<sup>2</sup>

Sometimes a composition of figures, such as the 'Hastings Fish Market' (possibly that now at South Kensington) and 'Boats putting off to a Vessel in Distress,' both exhibited in 1808, excited special attention. The latter picture seems to be the same that was bought by the Duke of Argyll for 100*l.*, probably that referred to by the Messrs. Redgrave as 'A Shipwreck at Hastings,' which they tell us was seized for a debt when in the hands of an engraver, poor Cristall having afterwards to redeem it at a heavy cost, offending his noble patron meanwhile by the delay.<sup>3</sup> The figures in these subjects were studied some years before, during a sojourn at Hastings prescribed to him for an attack of nervous debility.<sup>4</sup>

Since the first three years (1805 to 1807) he had not exhibited more than half a dozen purely classic subject pieces. They did not pay ; and it was doubtless under the incitement of the premium before mentioned that he painted the more important work exhibited

<sup>1</sup> Preface to *Etchings of Rustic Figures*.

<sup>2</sup> *Magazine of the Fine Arts*, i. (1821).

<sup>3</sup> See *Century of Painters*, i. 510. Dorrell gave Mr. Jenkins the following account of this transaction. 'Mr. Cristall,' he said, 'was advised to have the picture engraved on a large scale, which advice he adopted, and advanced 90*l.* on the engraver's producing an unfinished proof ; but, unfortunately for himself and the public, the plate was never finished, nor could Mr. C. ever gain possession of it or get the money refunded.'

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. M<sup>c</sup>Ketchnie's MS.

in 1820, with the title, 'Jupiter nursed in the Isle of Crete by the Nymphs and Corybantes.' An outline etched by George Cooke, of this composition of fourteen figures, is in the *Magazine of the Fine Arts* (1821).<sup>1</sup>

One or more of his contributions had been oil pictures, but he was not so successful in that material as in water-colours.<sup>2</sup> Pyne, writing in 1824, says that 'late in his career' Cristall 'attempted painting in oil,' but that, 'to stand up to a great work' was beyond his 'bodily strength,' and he was without the 'mastery over the material and the manual execution' only to be acquired in a long and arduous apprenticeship.<sup>3</sup>

JOHN GLOVER, from the first exhibition of 1805 to the last to which he contributed, that of 1817, had sent 290 works to the galleries, of which number 102 had been in the mixed exhibitions, and the remaining 188 in the first water-colour period, 1805 to 1812. His prolific brush had never been wanting at the annual shows. But at the time when the original Society came to an end he had been rather deeply bitten with the desire, which seems to have infected many of the water-colour school in these days of its wavering, to achieve success as a painter in oil. It has even been said that the determination to admit oil pictures to the gallery at Spring Gardens in 1813 was due to Glover's later practice having been chiefly in that material. This does not, however, appear to have been the cause of his retirement, the circumstances whereof will be related in a future chapter. Nor did he attain much mastery over oils, with the difficulties of which, according to Pyne, he was unable successfully to contend; his pictures therein being 'deficient in handling and execution,' however 'happy in arrangement and effect.'<sup>4</sup> 'Glover has tumbled into oil,' said Shee to Constable, at the Academy, where there was no very friendly feeling towards the draftsman-painter. 'His oil pictures,' says Redgrave, 'are less satisfactory than his water-colour, and have not improved with age, but appear smooth and painty.'<sup>5</sup> It is as usual impossible, except in a few instances, to say which of his contributions to the Spring Gardens rooms were in the one or the other medium. Many of his pictures do not profess to represent particular scenes. Where they do,

<sup>1</sup> This subject was repeated by him in 1833 and 1847.

<sup>2</sup> See Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1817).

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 195.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 82.

<sup>5</sup> *Dictionary of the English School.*

the subjects suffice to give some indication of his favourite haunts for sketching purposes. Views in the English Lake district are largely present throughout, with scarcely a year's intermission. In 1808, a large proportion of subjects from South, and in 1809 from North Wales, point back to foregoing visits to these picturesque resorts, and in 1814 a similar preponderance of views of Matlock show a recent sojourn there. But if so, these were not first visits, for among his drawings at the Royal Academy in 1801 and 1803 had been some from all three localities. Except a view of Mount Olympus in 1813, doubtless from a sketch by some other hand, his subjects are all from Great Britain; until 1815, when we find among his eighteen pictures (or drawings) a view on the Rhine, which he calls 'Drackenfeldts and Gotesberg Castles.'

Whatever may have been its quality, the appearance of this exhibit may be considered as marking an epoch in the Society's annals. For the year 1815 was an era in the history of our school of landscape, as it was in that of the politics of Europe and its alternations of war and peace. From that time forth the Continent became again an open field of study to our landscape painters; and, slowly at first, though afterwards with rapid increase, this extended liberty in the choice of subjects began to show itself in the annual exhibitions. Gradually, but surely, the influence of these new conditions affected the character of their art. This view of Glover's is thus remarkable as being apparently the first direct result, in our series of exhibitions, of an artist's trip across the Channel after the close of the long war, during which our landscape sketchers had been confined to home subjects. He had been among the many Englishmen who visited Paris during the short cessation of hostilities after the battle of Leipzig in 1814; and he seems, on the evidence of this picture, to have extended his tour on that occasion as far as the Rhine. When in Paris, too, he had made the most of his time; endeavouring, in his own way, to profit by the wondrous collection of masterpieces of art brought together at the Louvre by the Emperor Bonaparte, which had not yet been dispersed.

Glover painted a large canvas there in the autumn of 1814. It was not a copy from any one master, but a composition of the eclectic kind. He went about from one picture to another, striving to combine in his own work the various excellences of the great masters. The result was hung in the biennial exhibition of that



year, with the works of the Parisian artists. It measured about eight feet by six ; and he called it the *Bay of Naples*. It is said to have been, after all, much of the same class as what he had always been in the habit of painting. Stothard, R.A., on being told what Glover had done, characterized it as 'charlatanism.' But King Louis the XVIIIth conceived it worthy of a special mark of favour, and ordered a gold medal to be struck for presentation to the artist. Before it was finished, however, Bonaparte returned from Elba, and Glover had to fly to England, leaving his picture behind. When the Emperor revisited the Louvre, he too saw and admired this work of our artist's, and being informed of the above circumstances he fulfilled the King's intention, by sending both the picture and the gold medal to London. The picture was re-exhibited among Glover's contributions to the Spring Gardens gallery in his last year, 1817, under the name 'Landscape, composition.'<sup>1</sup>

In the mean time Glover had followed up his first continental trip by another to Switzerland in 1815, whence come the subjects of six of his exhibited views in 1816. He was not successful, however, in the gallery that year. 'Glover's expectations,' writes Uwins on the 14th of May, 'have certainly been most lamentably disappointed ; he is, notwithstanding, in good spirits, and talks of going to Italy, where he is to make, according to his account, 3,000 sketches. I do not know why he has chosen to fix the exact number, but so it is.'<sup>2</sup> He may have gone there, but nothing from the sunny South is to be found in the pictures of his next and final season. Why he then retired, and what became of him afterwards, will be related in due time.

Although not, as we have seen, devoid of reverence for the old masters of landscape, and even willing on occasion to employ his hand in copying from their works, John Glover was primarily and pre-eminently a student of nature. His knowledge was almost entirely derived from his own observation in the field. Thus 'his happiest pictures, though very satisfactory as transcripts of the things

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Edward Price, from whose MS. notes the above account is partly derived, states therein that he saw the identical picture on sale at a dealer's at Birmingham in or about the year 1853, and adds : 'The picture is coated with varnish as transparent as glass, and it has some very large and unsightly cracks, which go through varnish and picture, and I think the preparation of the canvas ; and I was told that they were very apparent on the back of the picture.' It is also said to have been sold at the auction rooms next to the British Institution, apparently at an earlier date.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 45

he intended to present to the eye as they would appear in nature, were not what would now be called works of art.' Such, at least, is the account given of them, by his pupil Price, to Mr. Jenkins in January 1856.

Glover, moreover, though no practical philosopher in composition, such as Varley and the men of his school, was an imitator of general effects, rather than special details, seeking more to portray the luminous gradation of atmosphere and the leafiness of trees, than to express the peculiar character of the scenes and objects which he depicted. Relying too much, however, on the same methods of working to produce the effects he aimed at, his generalization induces the same kind of monotony which is felt to exist in certain line engravings, whose exquisite workmanship cannot altogether compensate for the want either of artistic vigour in the design or of lifelike suggestion of the variety and the mystery of detail in a real scene. Some of these merits and defects are observed upon in the following words (a little transposed) from a contemporary critique on one of his exhibitions. 'Few artists have equalled Mr. Glover in the representation of still water,' and 'when he has to represent a mist in a mountainous scene he is particularly successful.' But 'his trees, in general, whether Italian or British, are too similar in growth and foliage.' The latter 'is executed in a way that gives the appearance of finish, but with the disadvantage of sameness.'<sup>1</sup>

Some account of the methods and materials which he employed to obtain these results has been preserved for us by observers who had the advantage of seeing him at his easel. For he made no secret of his work, but (like Girtin) freely permitted his friends to watch him, entertaining them while they did so with easy and agreeable conversation. When he was sketching in Dovedale, many families in the neighbourhood used to come to see him paint.

'I think,' says his pupil Price, 'that Mr. Glover's method with his water-colour drawings was always the same. I think that he invariably made a finished drawing in Indigo, Indian Red and Indian Ink ;<sup>2</sup> and then he coloured it. He had a glass of water, and a white plate upon which he mixed his tints ; and he worked with a spread camel's-

<sup>1</sup> *Magazine of Fine Arts*, i. 128 (1821).

<sup>2</sup> The writer adds : 'The Blue that Mr. Glover used has disappeared from many of his drawings, from all probably in which he used large portions of Indian Red. I think that the Blue has not left the drawings which were principally Blue and Indian Ink.'

hair pencil. With this little implement he produced a great number of drawings under a great variety of expressive effects, and there was a perfection of work which none of his pupils ever attained. With these means, and rapid handling, he could express with wonderful truth a gleam of light upon a wooded hill or passing shade across a mountain range, or any transient effect. . . . I think Mr. Glover always used the common drawing board and the drawing paper by Whatman of that description. I imagine that he never used either hot-pressed paper or the rough paper. Before he commenced his "neutral tint" he put on the paper a gradation of warm colour, beginning at the top with water farthest from the sun and increasing the strength to the bottom of the picture, or rather till he was below the horizon. He used Yellow Ochre and sometimes Light Red. If he had a soft cloudy effect to give, he made the paper damp, and while it was in that state he put in the sky. Then, with his "neutral tint" of Indigo and Indian Red he put in his distances, and nearly finished his work as he came to the foreground, reserving washes of this neutral tint to complete his effect. After this he used colour. He used very few colours, and those the most simple. Mr. Glover rarely used the sponge. Neither had he occasion to practise any device to alter his work. He was not liable to mistakes. Whatever his head approved, his hand was free to execute. He used to remark of an artist friend of whom he thought highly, that "his pictures of early morning always ended in moonlights." It was not so with Glover, for whatever he attempted he had the power fully to express.<sup>1</sup>

As to his handling and preparation of the brush, we have this further testimony from W. H. Pyne: 'Who that had not seen this eminent artist at his easel could have supposed the possibility of twisting camel-hair brushes together, spreading them, to the apparent destruction of their utility, yet dipping them in jet black Indian ink, or grey, or such tints as suited his purpose, and by a rapid and seemingly adventitious scrambling over the surface of his design, prepare the light and elegant forms of the birch or willow, the graceful sweepings of the branches of trees of larger growth, and the vast masses of woods and groves, sparkling in their various foliage, in all the brightness of a morning sun, or under the influence of the solemn repose of evening shade? Yet his works display these effects with exquisite

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



feeling, and with a vigour and spirit that no style of art could excel.' <sup>1</sup>

It will be readily believed that much of his great popularity as a teacher was due to these peculiarities of his technique. 'Glover's style of execution,' says the same writer, 'was hailed as a mighty novelty in art; it excited more astonishment the more it was seen; it was not one of those nine-day wonders that was followed with the blind furor of fashion and then forgot; it rather excited curiosity and a desire of imitation in a thousand admirers. The apparently careless scramblings of black and grey; the absence of defined forms; the vapourish appearance of the clouds, the mountains, and the distances; the distinct unbroken patches of yellow, orange, green, red, brown, &c., which upon close inspection made up the foreground, middle-grounds, and off-skip in his compositions, seemed entirely to preclude all necessity for the labour of previous study. . . . The amateur, enraptured at so happy a discovery . . . set about making huge drawings in the style of Glover.' <sup>2</sup> Thus, as had been the case with Gainsborough, Glover's so-called 'style,' effective as it was in his own hand, became little more than a trick in the hands of pupils, not 'to the manner born.' In this view he is to be regarded as the successor of William Payne. And perhaps Payne, who was apt to be severe on fashionable systems of teaching, was not unjust in calling him the originator of a bad taste among dilettanti artists. <sup>3</sup> But it would be unfair to call him a charlatan. When he charged his two guineas an hour for lessons, he justified the high terms by declaring that, although he did not know whether he could teach anything worth the money, the sum in question did not exceed the value of his time.

Glover's best works do not often appear in the market. They seem to have been bought, not for profitable resale, but for the possessor's enjoyment, and were sometimes destined to hang for ages in the houses in which they were painted. He, on occasion, executed local views at gentlemen's seats. <sup>4</sup> Payne regrets, in December 1823, that Glover had then ceased to exhibit topographical views of home scenery, such as those he sent to the Society's first galleries, in Brook Street and Bond Street.

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* 132-3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*. 145

<sup>4</sup> Calke Abbey, Derbyshire (Sir George Carew<sup>th</sup> Bart.); Randcombe Park, Gloucestershire (Sir Wm. Guise, Bart.); Miserdene, ditto (Sir Edwin Sandys, Bart.); Sudbury Hall (Lord Vernon); Lambton Hall (Earl of Durham), for example

Among his most admired works were the view of Durham Cathedral, in Lambton Hall, for which he received 500 guineas; and the 'Vale of Avoca,' which belonged to the Rev. Alfred Padley, of Bulwell Hall, Nottingham. Mr. Price's father gave him 100 guineas for a view of Goodrich Castle, and Allport the like sum for an interior of the same building. A picture of 'Loch Lomond' is also spoken of as having obtained a large price. The artist had at one time a room fitted up with racks all round, in which he placed his works, grouped according to price; one for the fifty-guinea pictures, another for those at thirty, and so forth.

Although it is almost entirely as a painter of landscape that Glover is now heard of, his pencil was sometimes employed with skill and effect in depicting cattle and other animals. In his earlier years he made 'exquisite drawings in water-colours of cattle;' and 'the effects of early morning,' of which he was so fond, were displayed in meadow subjects with cattle and the sun shining through vapour. Some of his animal studies were so solid and deceptive as to give rise to incredible stories. It was said that his pet starling, being solitary, once tried to escape from his room over the back of the cows in one of his large pictures; and that a cattle-man who called with a bulldog had much ado to restrain the animal from an attack on a bull in another. These were life-size studies. He would also paint with equal care his little friendly birds, or a frog in the dewy grass.<sup>1</sup> He etched, too, as above stated, some plates of cattle, which are in the spirit of the Dutch masters; and his very last contributions to the Society's gallery were 'A Cow,' and 'Ass and Foal,' respectively 'modelled from Nature.' Glover's works have not often been engraved. His view of Lambton Hall was effectively translated into black and white by John Pye in 1816.

ROBERT HILLS, after taking the active part above recorded in the affairs of the old Water-Colour Society, at its foundation, and as Secretary throughout the days of its pristine purity, had, since the ill-assorted union of 1813, contented himself with merely sending drawings to the gallery. For the last two years he had been absent

<sup>1</sup> Uwins wrote, however, of the exhibition of 1816: 'Glover's great big cows have entirely failed, notwithstanding the frog, the snail, and the dandelion. There happening to be a great many cows on the side of the room on which these are hung, some wicked wit said it resembled a Smithfield cattle show, and this opinion has been repeated rather too often for the interests of the exhibition.' (*Memoir of Uwins*, i. 44, 45.)

altogether. He had had 203 works hung between 1805 and 1812, and thirty-seven from 1813 to 1818, when, as an outside Exhibitor, his annual number was limited by law. With scarcely an exception, they are of cattle, sheep, deer (mostly fallow) and a few other animals, not unfrequently an ass and foal. Such of the landscape backgrounds as are of a specific scene, commonly represent Windsor Park and Forest, scenes in the English Lake country; in 1811 and 1812, Surrey park and farm scenery about Dorking and Box Hill; and in 1817 and 1818, that around Sevenoaks in Kent. Towards the end of the period, the picturesque farmyards of these home counties become frequent subjects. A drawing in 1812 of 'A Man perishing in a Snow-storm,' with lines from Thomson's 'Winter,' was exceptional, but connects itself with later drawings in which he tried to give the effect of falling snow.

He had moved in 1805-6 from George Street to the artist quarter north of Oxford Street, where he had remained till 1812 in Newman Street, and since then in London Street, Fitzroy Square.

His industry had not been confined, even in the earlier period, to drawing for the gallery, and taking pupils. He had been engaged also in completing his set of etchings of animals, which now amounted to a vast series, the publication of which extended from 1798 to 1815. They comprise studies of deer 151, horses 48, asses, and mules 80, dogs 55, sheep and goats 108, swine 36, oxen 200, and groups of cattle 100. They were executed entirely by his own hand from his studies from nature, and are remarkable for the knowledge they exhibit of the anatomy as well as of the habits of the various animals. The price of the series of 780<sup>1</sup> etchings was 40*l*. 'Hills's own collection of these etchings, arranged and touched upon by himself, many of them in unique states, amounting to the great number of 1,241, may be examined in the Print Room of the British Museum, to which establishment they were presented by the late Mrs. Garle of Hamilton Terrace.'<sup>2</sup>

Like Glover, too, he made some essays in the plastic art. In the catalogue of 1815 we find the following rather startling entry: '235. From the Head of a Stag, modelled by himself;' explained, however, by the name which follows, of '*R. Hills*' as the exhibitor. And, in 1817, he modelled a Red Deer, in terra-cotta, of fine character, repre-

<sup>1</sup> This includes two frontispieces, the designs for which were exhibited in 1806 and 1808.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MS.



senting the animal in vigorous action, at that season when it is dangerous to approach him. This his friends induced him to execute in bronze, but it appears not to have been publicly exhibited until many years after.<sup>1</sup>

The subjects of the above-mentioned works give no indication of foreign travel. But at the close of the war Hills was one of the artists who took an early opportunity of making a trip across the Channel. Within a month of the victory at Waterloo, he traversed the great battle-field, 'note-book and sketch-book in hand, recording his hurried impressions of what he saw, and tracing the outlines of Hougomont, La Haye Sainte, La Belle Alliance, and many a point now famous in history,'<sup>2</sup> when 'the mounds of the slain' were, he wrote, 'but thinly covered with earth,' and 'blood-stained fragments of all kinds encumbered the ground.' On his return to England, he arranged his notes and sketches, and they were published in a quarto volume in 1816, entitled *Sketches in Flanders and Holland*, 'with some account of a Tour through parts of those countries, in a series of letters to a friend shortly after the Battle of Waterloo.' The work is illustrated by thirty-six aquatinted engravings etched by himself, and some of them coloured. A reference in the preface to 'a former series of letters,' apparently unpublished, 'descriptive of Paris,' shows that he also visited that city; and a drawing by Copley Fielding, exhibited in 1816, of 'Dieppe, in Normandy, from a Sketch by R. Hills, Esq.,' gives a further hint as to his route.

Though Hills had thrown up his Membership in 1812, and had for a time ceased to exhibit with the Society, he had not bid his final farewell. His last exit was not to be until he left the mortal stage also, a quarter of a century after. In 1818 we read of his staying with Mr. Fawkes of Farnley and elsewhere in the country, for the recovery of his health, and to study deer character.<sup>3</sup>

One more of the foundation Members remains to be dealt with; but he demands a chapter to himself.

<sup>1</sup> It was purchased by the late Mr. Thomas Garle, of Hamilton Terrace, in 1841, for 200*l.*; and was shown in the British division of Sculpture at the London International Exhibition of 1862, where its spirit and truthfulness commanded general admiration. See Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1818), p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. MS.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1818), p. 528.

## CHAPTER III

## JOHN VARLEY

*Varley* a central figure—His pupils—Generosity to young artists—Nature of his teaching—Exhibited and engraved works—Impecuniosity—Enthusiasm—Blake and his visions—Belief in astrology—Published writings.

JOHN VARLEY was, throughout this period, a central figure, not only of the Society, but of the school of water-colour painters. We have seen that at the birth-time of the former he was living in Broad Street, Golden Square, and had for some years past been giving lessons to amateurs. In 1813 he moved from No. 15 to No. 5. In 1814 or 1815 he migrated to 44 Conduit Street, and in 1817 to 10 (afterwards called 10½) Titchfield Street, and there built a 'gallery for the display of his works.'<sup>1</sup> He also educated students for the profession; and in course of time a goodly company of artists yet to be named, and some of great distinction, had profited either by his direct tuition, or enjoyed the benefit of his kindly and sometimes gratuitous advice.

His pupils lodged in his house as apprentices, his own family circle increasing round him at the same time. Turner of Oxford has been mentioned as one of his earliest pupils. In its proper place will be described his generous reception of the modest stranger David Cox, who came to him very early in the century for lessons; and it has been stated above how freely a little later he gave his help to Copley Fielding; and how even the art of Peter De Wint was bettered by Varley's judicious counsel. Among other Members of the Water-Colour Society who derived like fatherly benefit from him were William Hunt, F. O. Finch,<sup>2</sup> and Samuel Palmer. John Whichelo is also believed to have been an early pupil of Varley's, and at a late period of the latter's career his influence is said<sup>3</sup> to have rescued from a clerk's

<sup>1</sup> Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1817), p. 551.

<sup>2</sup> An entertaining account of Varley's impulsive and energetic way of maintaining discipline in his pupil-room is given in *Memorials of F. O. Finch*, pp. 20, 21.

<sup>3</sup> Cassell's *Celebrities of the Century* (1887).

desk the distinguished painter W. Holman Hunt, now a Member of our Society. Among the more eminent of his pupils were also John Linnell and William Mulready, and among the less the landscape painter H. B. Zeigler.

Many are the stories of his generosity to young artists, arising in part from the kindness of his open disposition, and in part from a vehement desire to infuse into others the ardent spirit with which he pursued his own vocation. One of them has recently been told of a well-known northern architect, John Dobson, who came to London from Newcastle in 1810 to obtain the best instruction he could get in water-colour drawing, before commencing his profession. He went to Varley. But 'Varley,' writes Dobson's daughter and biographer, 'declined to be troubled with young pupils, and at first declared that he could not spare even half an hour. Observing, however, the intense disappointment of the youth, he at last consented to give him lessons at five in the morning, his time during the day being fully occupied. This concession, made at some inconvenience, marked the recognition of a kindred spirit. The master soon perceived the uncommon qualities of his pupil, and not only agreed to give him daily instruction, but invited him to stay in his house, and would hardly part with him when, six weeks later, suitable lodgings were found.'<sup>1</sup> Master and pupil 'worked all day together,' and 'a mutual esteem sprang up which continued in after life.'<sup>2</sup> It is said that Varley wished him to devote his talent to water-colour painting. Dobson's view of Seaton Delaval at the Royal Academy in 1815 has already been mentioned as the first coloured drawing exhibited there of a strictly architectural subject; drawings sent there by architects before that time having been in Indian ink, without artistic effect.<sup>3</sup>

John Varley despised secrets. He would freely tell what he knew, to the mortification of the illiberal, and the profit of most artists of his acquaintance. When he met with congenial soil, he liked to cultivate it. Discovering a taste for art in a lad employed to clean his boots, he took him in hand and made an artist of him.<sup>4</sup> His enthusiasm was infectious. At a house where he gave lessons 'not only his pupils painted,' say the Messrs. Redgrave, 'but the very servants took brush and paper to try their skill at landscape painting.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of John Dobson*, by M. J. Dobson, 1886.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Supra*, p. 9n.

<sup>4</sup> *Ex relatione* the late C. S. Varley, John Varley's last surviving son.



Varley knocking at the door on one occasion was delayed a minute or two, and on the servant opening it, the painter found that the delay had been occasioned by John's being engaged at the moment washing in a sky at the hall table; the work did not please Varley, so he stopped on his way to the parlour, seized the brush, and immediately began to exemplify the necessary changes in the work before him.<sup>1</sup> The lady whom Varley had been engaged to teach on this occasion was a Miss Edwards, of Bedford Square; and to make the story more complete, it is believed that the footman whom Varley helped, afterwards became a professional artist.<sup>2</sup>

He was very outspoken, and sometimes would give his advice when it was not asked; a dangerous practice, but one not always to his disadvantage, as in the following instance: 'Varley,' writes Constable, R.A., in a letter, 'has just called on me, and I have bought a little drawing of him. He told me how to *do* landscape, and was so kind as to point out all my defects. The price of the drawing was a guinea and a half *to a gentleman*, and a guinea only to an artist; but I insisted upon his taking the larger sum, as he had clearly proved to me that I was no artist.'<sup>3</sup>

Varley's benevolence was not restricted to brethren of the brush. He could be kind to some whom many artists regard as natural enemies. He not only encouraged children when they tried to draw, but attracted them with cakes to gambol near him as he sketched from nature, and to scramble around for his very loose halfpence.<sup>4</sup>

At the period at which our history has now arrived, Varley's terms for teaching amateurs had risen to a guinea an hour. He and his wife's brother-in-law Clementi had arranged to start guinea lessons at the same time, the one in painting, the other in music. Varley's, and it may be Clementi's too, were probably worth the money. It was remarked that he could not give a lesson without some advantage being derived by the pupil; and he said himself that he could teach many parts of his art in a lesson, which it had cost him years to learn. For Varley's teaching was not mere instruction in methods and processes, and the laying down of rules to imitate objects and paint in a set 'style.' It was addressed to the mind. If ever an artist painted with brains as well as colour, it was John Varley. 'As a preceptor,' says Pyne, 'we know of no one to prefer

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 498.

<sup>2</sup> *Ex relatione* C. S. Varley.

<sup>3</sup> Leslie's *Life of Constable*, p. 211.

<sup>4</sup> See *Century of Painters*, i. p. 499, 502.

to Mr. Varley when he "sets to it doggedly," for no artist perhaps has ever studied his department with more abstract reasoning upon cause and effect.<sup>1</sup>

Happily we are not left wholly in darkness as to the nature of his tuition, and the kind of truths which he inculcated ; for he set down the one and exemplified the other in several published writings, designed for the use of students out of the reach of his personal superintendence. The chief of these, which came out in numbers, is in its complete form entitled *A Treatise on the Principles of Landscape Design*, 'with General Observations and Instructions to young Artists. Illustrated with sixteen Highly Finished Views. By John Varley.—Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, Paternoster Row.' The sixteen views are engraved in aquatint,<sup>2</sup> and printed in brown ink, two on a plate ; and the eight plates, each with its explanatory letterpress, were issued as the serial numbers at 5s. apiece. They bear dates of publication from 'February 20, 1816,' to 'May 1, 1821 ;' the first seven, down to the date 'February 1st, 1818,' being published by Varley at his successive addresses, the eighth by his old friend J. P. Neale at 'Bennett Street, Blackfriars Road.'

The titles given by the author to the several landscapes (which are of course from his own designs) indicate to some extent his classification, such as it is, of the whole subject. They are as follow : i. (I & 2), Principles of Light and Shade. ii. Principles of objects reflected in water. iii. (E) Epic [Pastoral] ;<sup>3</sup> (F) Pastoral. iv. (G) River Scene ; (H) Ouse Bridge, York. v. (I) Sunshine ; (K) Twilight. vi. (L & M) Principles of Skies in Fine or Stormy Weather. vii. (N & O) Marine. viii. General Landscape ; Mountainous Landscape.

This work appears to have been the first attempt to write systematically on the theory of 'effect.' The author is not content with stating rules of composition, but explains the object of each device ; one, it may be, to conduct the eye from point to point ; another, to arrest the gaze, or heighten an impression by the sense of contrast. And we find in his writing the same happiness in illustration, and ready

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 13.

<sup>2</sup> They are all engraved by F. C. Lewis, who aquatinted the first plate of Turner's *Liber Studiorum* ; except the second, which was by G. Lewis, and the eighth, by J. Gleadah.

<sup>3</sup> Some of the relations between Varley's classification of Landscape and that of Turner were pointed out by the present writer in a little book entitled '*Notes and Memoranda respecting the Liber Studiorum* of J. M. W. Turner, R.A. ; by the late John Pye ; edited by John Lewis Roget.' 8vo. Van Voorst, 1879.

wit in the perception of analogies, which are said to have characterized his verbal instruction, and, indeed, his ordinary conversation. Odd and quaint as he often was in his way of expressing himself, and unpolished in style, he was always apt, familiar, and original.

Many of his sayings remained in the memories of his pupils, and some have been handed down by tradition. 'Nature,' he would say, 'wants cooking,' though there was no warmer advocate than he of studying the raw material. 'Every picture ought to have a *look-there*,' was his way of saying that the spectator's eye must be directed to the point of interest.<sup>1</sup> He had a pretty similitude wherewith to point out the value of flat tints, and how the points of dark and light tell upon quiet even ground. 'Flat tints,' said he, 'are like silence, in which you can hear the faintest whisper.' To a lady whose drawing was too smooth and timid in its execution, he said, wishing to impress her with an idea of dash and vigour, 'Did you ever notice a barber sharpen a razor? That's what it wants, the decision and the whacks.'<sup>2</sup>

John Varley had illustrated his own principles by the display of no less than 435 works in the Society's galleries from 1805 to 1820, during which period he had abstained from exhibiting elsewhere.<sup>3</sup> But these are unequally divided between the periods of eight years. In the first, or water-colour period, he had 330, or an average of about 41 a year; in the second 105, or an average of about 13. A large proportion of the first must have been small drawings, no doubt often executed as pupils' lessons. But among them were probably included many of his happiest and most characteristic works.

It was of his small drawings more particularly that Pyne wrote thus: 'There is a classic air pervading his best compositions which savours of the boldness of Poussin, united with the elegance of Claude; a happy combination of mountain, wood, lake, and river, that cannot fail to delight the eye of taste: the buildings, too, in his designs, are

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 498.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* F. O. Finch.

<sup>3</sup> Varley does not appear to have done much work expressly for the engravers. There is a set of six aquatint landscapes ( $6\frac{3}{4} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$  in.), small folio oblong, engraved by F. C. Lewis, published Feb. 1806, of the following subjects: 'Near Burford, Oxon,' 'Kirkstall Abbey,' 'Redcliff Church, Bristol,' 'Llanelted near Dolgelly,' 'Knaresborough Castle,' and 'Near Brecknock;' and in Byrne's *Britannia Depicta*, Part III., is a 'View in Bridge Street, Chester,' engraved after him by John Landseer, with the date 24 Jan. 1810. Among F. Stevens' etchings of *Cottages and Farmhouses* are one or more after J. Varley. There are also a few small sepia designs by his hand for pocket-book illustrations.



so judiciously placed, whether on a promontory, embosomed in a wood, or insulated on a plain, and so aptly formed and well-proportioned, that they are never out of place.' He further characterizes them as 'admirable in the arrangements of their parts . . . powerful in effect . . . vivid in colour,' and 'intelligent and full of expression.'<sup>1</sup>

It is of drawings of this period that the Messrs. Redgrave give the following summary of his way of painting, and just remarks on the character of his art: 'Varley's tints are beautifully laid, with a full and free pencil, and stippling is not resorted to, to flatten the masses; but he said that he got very fine qualities and suggestions in his skies by pumping vigorously upon them; yet the washing is not apparent, the tints of clouds being generally very sharply defined, and this is the case also with his foliage, which is massive and large, rather than imitative; he sometimes resorted to taking out the light in his foliage with bread, but did not use body colour in his best works. . . . Varley's art was based on that of Girtin, rather than of Turner, but his study and appreciation of the old masters, Claude and Poussin, enabled him to give a classic air to his landscapes that quite removed them from any imitation of Girtin's style. Turner's pictures consist of multitudinous details properly subordinated to breadth of treatment; but Varley's compositions, on the contrary, have few parts: the details are passed over, and great breadth and simplicity is the result, sometimes it is true with a tendency to vacancy and emptiness, and in his works for the dealers often verging on a sort of stereotyped conventionalism.'<sup>2</sup> . . . 'When he laid himself out to do his best, and when he studied his subjects on the spot, his pictures have qualities that we find in no other painters—freshness, clearness, largeness of manner, and a classical air, even in the most common and matter-of-fact subjects.'<sup>3</sup> Though no slavish imitator of natural objects, he was so minutely truthful as to the general aspects of nature that in his representation of distances it was said, 'you might decide the number of miles each object was from the foreground.'<sup>4</sup>

Though he constantly made use of the same subjects, and even 'searched the prints and etchings of the old masters for portions to introduce into his compositions,'<sup>5</sup> he never could repeat a work identically, but always varied the effect or arrangement, perhaps by adding

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 12.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 502.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 495.

<sup>4</sup> *Memoirs of J. B. Papworth* (privately printed), p. 28.

<sup>5</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 495.

a new foreground, and sometimes patching his paper and adding pieces to the top or sides of a drawing.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the whole series of exhibitions, Varley had been very constant to his Welsh subjects, though he varied them, but in smaller numbers, with views in the home counties ; in and about Oxford ; in Yorkshire, &c. ; and, from and after the year 1809, in Northumberland. In the above cases it may be presumed that he painted from his own sketches. A few subjects come from Scotland, the Lakes of Killarney, and Devon and Somerset. These, being smaller in number than one would expect had he been known to have travelled in the districts named, may be conjectured to have been made up at second hand. In and about 1814, there were, as above stated, views in Spain and Portugal, confessedly from sketches made by others on the spot. A view of Windsor, exhibited in 1809, was reproduced in a coloured print in Ackermann's *Repository*.<sup>2</sup> Some subjects on the banks of the Thames between Battersea and Vauxhall, apparently those exhibited in and about 1812, are singled out by the Messrs. Redgrave as displaying the best qualities of John Varley's art.<sup>3</sup> Sometimes he made a more ambitious effort. There were, in 1814, a 'Curfew,' and 'Thomson's Grave, from Collins's Elegy,'<sup>4</sup> each with accompanying verses in the catalogue ; and in 1820 another 'Curfew' sounds, to the same lines as the first. To one work in particular, 'The Burial of Saul,' exhibited in 1819, special attention had been drawn. But this, it is believed, was a large oil painting. It was in illustration of the sublime passage, quoted from the first chapter of the Second Book of Samuel, containing the words, 'How are the mighty fallen !' The motive is said to have been suggested to the painter on hearing his daughter play the Dead March from the oratorio of 'Saul.' The work was engraved by Linnell, who is understood to have painted the figures on the left of the picture.

If, with all his prolific power and industry, the patronage he enjoyed, and the high contemporary estimate of the merit of his work, John Varley failed as he did to realize a competency by his exertions, this failure must be set down partly to domestic circumstances beyond the fact of his having eight children to support, and partly to a certain hopeless inability on his own part to remain solvent.

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Mrs. Varley.

<sup>2</sup> ix. p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 495.

<sup>4</sup> This subject is repeated in 1823, with a much longer quotation.

He used to say himself that whatever money was put into his pocket was sure to run out at the bottom. The latter defect arose in some measure from the careless generosity of his disposition, and it appears to have been aided as a source of extravagance by the habits of his first wife,<sup>1</sup> and the conduct of a sometime son-in-law. For himself, he lived from hand to mouth, never put by a farthing, and indeed was always in difficulties. But he declared that his home troubles, 'which would have worried any other man into his grave, were beneficial to him, as just preventing him from being *too* happy.'<sup>2</sup> On Linnell's asking him, one day, how he was getting on, he answered, 'Much better, much better; there are only four men, I think, now, who could put in executions.'<sup>3</sup> A friend met him one day racing along at great speed, somewhere near Cavendish Square, and would have stopped him, but Varley pushed by, saying, 'I am in great haste, I cannot stop now. I have found a man who only takes 35 per cent.'<sup>4</sup> The Messrs. Redgrave relate that 'Varley had an original way of getting paid by rich but forgetful debtors—a way he used to say which saved the unpleasantness of law. 'I send in a new bill,' said the painter, 'making a mistake in the amount of a guinea or two *against myself*, and the money comes in directly.'<sup>5</sup>

It was not only in matters of art, but in everything which he undertook, that Varley showed the enthusiasm of his nature. Whatever irons he had in the fire, he heated them hot. For a long time he busied himself in the attempt to produce perpetual motion; but at last he allowed his brother Cornelius to convince him that the thing was impossible. And so he was content to take out a patent for a carriage with six wheels. But he could not regulate the wheel of Fortune, and lost his money.

A strong passion for the marvellous,<sup>6</sup> which induced him to cultivate his credulity, led to the acquaintanceship which he formed with the great visionary, William Blake. To John Varley's simple and enthusiastic nature the spiritualism of Blake afforded a special fascination. He was some twenty years older than Varley, and approaching sixty years of age when the friendship was first cemented. They

<sup>1</sup> Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, i. 296.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Finch.

<sup>5</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 500.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 500.

<sup>4</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Leitch.

<sup>6</sup> Gilchrist describes his intense disappointment on one occasion, on learning that certain ghostly noises next door were only due to the cowl of a chimney. (*Life of Blake*.)



came together through Linnell, and from about 1818 had been constant companions.<sup>1</sup> During the two succeeding years, it was Varley's delight to assist at this weird artist's visions, and encourage him to produce in graphic form the figments of his brain. Blake was then living in South Molton Street. It was at Varley's house in Titchfield Street as a studio, that in midnight hours he received his ghostly sitters. 'Historical, fabulous, even typical personages,' seen in the mind's eye of Varley's strange guest, were believed by the simple and credulous host to have been personally present in the dingy artists' quarters about Fitzroy Square.

Gilchrist gives the following account of these extraordinary *séances*. Blake's 'visionary faculty was so much under control, that at the wish of a friend he could summon before his abstracted gaze any of the familiar forms and faces he was asked for. This was during the favourable and befitting hours of the night, from nine or ten in the evening, until one or two, or perhaps three or four o'clock in the morning; Varley sitting by, sometimes slumbering, sometimes waking! Varley would say, "Draw me Moses," or David; or would call for a likeness of Julius Cæsar, or Cassibellaunus, or Edward the Third, or some other great historical personage. Blake would answer, "There he is!" and paper and pencil being at hand, he would begin drawing with the utmost alacrity and composure, looking up from time to time as though he had a real sitter before him; ingenuous Varley, meanwhile, straining wistful eyes into vacancy and seeing nothing, though he tried hard, and at first expected his faith and patience to be rewarded by a genuine apparition. A "vision" had a very different signification with Blake to that it had in literal Varley's mind. . . . Critical friends would trace in all these heads the Blake mind and hand, his receipt for a face. . . . John Varley, however, could not be persuaded to look at them from this merely rationalistic point of view.' He 'accepted all Blake said of them, added in writing the names, and in a few instances the day and hour when they were seen.'<sup>2</sup>

Shortly after Blake's death, which occurred in 1827, Varley published the following particulars of one of the strangest of these fancies, called 'The Ghost of a Flea,' with an engraving of the portrait

<sup>1</sup> Allan Cunningham's account of Blake in his *Lives of the Painters* is said to have been mainly derived from information furnished by Varley.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Blake*, pp. 251, 252.

referred to. 'This spirit visited his' (Blake's) 'imagination in such a figure as he never anticipated in an insect. As I was anxious to make the most correct investigation in my power, of the truth of these visions, on hearing of this spiritual apparition of a Flea, I asked him if he could draw for me the resemblance of what he saw: he instantly said, "I see him now before me." I therefore gave him paper and a pencil, with which he drew the portrait. I felt convinced by his mode of proceeding, that he had a real image before him, for he left off, and began on another part of the paper, to make a separate drawing of the mouth of the Flea, which the spirit having opened, he was prevented from proceeding with the first sketch until he had closed it. During the time occupied in completing the drawing, the Flea told him that all fleas were inhabited by the souls of such men as were by nature bloodthirsty to excess, and were therefore providentially confined to the size and form of insects; otherwise were he himself for instance the size of a horse, he would depopulate a great portion of the country. He added, that if in attempting to leap from one island to another, he should fall into the sea, he could swim, and should not be lost. This spirit afterwards appeared to Blake, and afforded him a view of his whole figure.'<sup>1</sup> The existence of this supposed creature, Varley actually treats as a fact, to reason from inductively, in support of the science of astrology. But human credulity knows no bounds. Nearly all of these visionary heads mostly dated 1820, became the property of Linnell, who made coloured copies of three of them for Varley.<sup>2</sup>

Blake, Linnell, and John Varley, writes Gilchrist,<sup>3</sup> were 'a curiously contrasted trio, as an eye-witness reports, to look upon in animated converse: Blake, with his quiet manner, his fine head—broad above, small below; Varley's the reverse: Varley, stout and heavy, yet active, and in exuberant spirits—ingenious, diffuse, poetical, eager, talking as fast as possible; Linnell, original, brilliant, with strongly marked character, and filial manner towards Blake, assuming nothing of the patron, forbearing to contradict his stories of his visions, &c., but trying to make reason out of them. Varley found them explicable astrologically—"Sagittarius crossing Taurus"—and the like;

<sup>1</sup> *A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy.*

<sup>2</sup> Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, pp. 253, 256.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* 295, 296. This refers to a rather later period; after Linnell had, in March 1824, taken up his residence at Collins's Farm, Hampstead, between North End and the Spaniards, where Blake and John Varley often met, and sometimes Cornelius Varley also, and Richter.

while Blake, on his part, believed in his friend's astrology, to a certain extent. *He* thought you could oppose and conquer the stars.'

The last reference touches upon another and a more lasting phase of Varley's superstition, namely, his firm belief in 'the vain science of astrology,'<sup>1</sup> the pursuit of which he carried to a fanatical length. Many were the stories told of his practice in casting nativities, and predicting future events. It has even been alleged that he made a profit of his supposed skill as an astrologer, and took regular fees for telling fortunes.<sup>2</sup> That, however, was not the case. On the contrary, he is known to have returned a 5*l.* note which some one sent him in acknowledgment of a favour of this kind. Yet there is no reason to doubt the correctness of Messrs. Redgrave's statement as to his being 'shrewd enough to see,' and 'candid enough to own, that his astrology was one of the causes of his popularity as a drawing master. "Ladies come to take drawing lessons," said he, "that they may get their nativities cast."<sup>3</sup> Varley rarely was introduced to anyone without in a short time asking him for the day and hour of his birth. His pockets were always crammed with old almanacks to refer to for the sign of the Zodiac rising upon the horizon at the time.<sup>4</sup> His theory was that the 'house' (as it was called) influenced the life, and that even a personal likeness could be traced to the sign. And this he afterwards made the principal theme of the extraordinary book above quoted, whereof he published but one out of four projected parts. The full title is '*A Treatise on Zodiacal Physiognomy*, illustrated with engravings of heads and features; accompanied by tables of rising of the 12 signs of the Zodiac; and containing also new and astrological explanations of some remarkable portions of ancient mythological history. By John Varley. —London. Printed for the author, 10½ Titchfield Street; and sold by Longman & Co., Paternoster Row. 1828. Price Five shillings.' This rare and curious book contains sixty-four octavo pages of letter-press, and five plates, four at least of which were engraved by Linnell. Some of them are filled with outline heads of Varley's friends supposed to exemplify the author's theory, and among them is the

<sup>1</sup> John Dryden also was 'a believer and a student of the vain science of astrology.' (Sir W. Scott's *Notes to 'The Wild Gallant.'*)

<sup>2</sup> See Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, i. 249; *Memoir of J. B. Papworth*, p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 5cc

<sup>4</sup> J. J. *ex relatione* Ward.



'Ghost of a Flea from Blake's Vision' above mentioned. The whole figure is promised in a forthcoming part. The portraits, with others not engraved, were taken by Varley by means of a *camera lucida*. Varley considered this science of 'Zodiacal Physiognomy' as a 'branch of natural philosophy,' distinct from 'Judicial Astrology,' which deals in prediction. It is in relation to his practice in the latter branch that the following anecdotes are related. Some of them are said to be authentic, but for the truth of others it would perhaps be hazardous to vouch.

'Calling one day on a well-known picture dealer, he sought to dispose of some of his drawings, which he had brought in a portfolio. The dealer declined, but only to be again and again urged; at length Varley exclaimed: "I shall sell before I leave the house," mentioning as the ground for his assertion some particular relation which existed between the planet under which he was born, and another of the celestial luminaries. The dealer invited him to tea, still refusing to purchase; but as Varley was on the point of leaving the house, a friend of the dealer's came in, and on being introduced to the artist, then and there bought his pictures. "Ah!" said Varley, "I told you I should sell before I left your house."' <sup>1</sup> Sceptics might answer that he was determined not to quit the premises till he did sell.

It was said that the death of Collins, R.A., came, to the day, as the stars had told Varley that it would, and that 'Scriven the engraver was wont to declare that certain facts, which *could* be only known to himself, were nevertheless confided to his ear by Varley with every particular.' Then 'he cast the nativities of James Ward the famous animal painter's children. So many of his predictions came true, their father, a man of strong though peculiar religious opinions—for he, too, was a "character"—began to think the whole affair a sinful forestalling of God's will, and destroyed the nativities.' <sup>2</sup>

A reference to dates was found by the Messrs. Redgrave not quite to bear out an oft-told tale of the fulfilment of Varley's sealed prediction, confided to Mulready, and only divulged on Callcott's wedding-day, that the bridegroom was to remain single until he was fifty; for the event of his marriage occurred on his forty-eighth birthday. Varley had also prophesied that Callcott would go to

<sup>1</sup> *Burlington Fine Arts Club Catalogue*, 1871.

<sup>2</sup> *Gilchrist's Life of Blake*, pp. 249-256.

Italy, and so he certainly did—three months after he had been told that the Fates required it.<sup>1</sup>

It has already been mentioned how Varley considered his being tossed by *Taurus* in early life as a predestined event. On a later occasion, *Aquarius* seems to have been his persecutor: warned of danger from water, he remained at home all day, and then fell over a pail and hurt his leg.<sup>2</sup> On another, as will have to be related in due place, it was the element of fire that was set against him by the Fates. Records of predictions that come true are more durable than those of failures. But there is still some evidence that Varley's were not always right. The Rev. William Harness used to declare that in his case they were entirely wrong; and the Duke of Sussex, P.R.S., laughed at his astrology; asking him whether the position of the stars would account for some corns with which his Royal Highness had lately been troubled.<sup>3</sup>

Besides his more important work, the 'Treatise on Landscape Design,' Varley also published the following works on the practice of Art: '*A Practical Treatise on the Art of Drawing in Perspective*, adapted for the study of those who draw from nature; by which the usual errors may be avoided. By John Varley. London: Printed for Sherwood, Gilbert, and Piper, Paternoster Row, and Ackermann and Co., Strand.' The book, or pamphlet, or whatever it may be called, which is in quarto size, and bears this title, is in fact a collection of four folio broad-sheets of letterpress, accompanying two plates of diagrams of the same size, engraved by W. Lowry, pl. i. bearing in the imprint the date of publication 1 Dec. 1815, and Varley's address in Conduit Street, and pl. ii. the date 1 Sep. 1820, with the name of 'J. P. Neale,' Varley's early friend and fellow-sketcher, and his address 'Bennett Street, Blackfriars Road.'—'*Precepts of Landscape Drawing*, exemplified in 15 Views; with Instructions to young Artists. By John Varley.' This consists merely of two folio plates, folded in quarto, one engraved by J. C. Lewis, the other by Josh. Gleadah; the first comprising nine and the second six pretty little aquatint views, with a note to each pointing out some plain principle or device involved in the composition. Pl. i. has the date 1 Jan. 1818, and pl. ii. 22 Dec

<sup>1</sup> See Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, ii. 401, 402.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 501. A similar story of another man so warned by Varley, spraining his ankle over a coal-scuttle after lying abed all day to avoid accidents, is told by Gilchrist. (See *Life of Blake*, p. 249.)

<sup>3</sup> *Ex relatione* C. S. Varley.

1818, with Varley's then address in Titchfield Street (the number being changed in the interval from 10 to 10½).—*Varley's List of Colours*, otherwise described as 'Specimens of 19 Permanent Colours, with particular instructions for mixing and using them.' This is likewise a broad sheet of the same size, folded; with the several colours painted by hand in oblong spaces under one another. The quality of permanence would certainly be denied to some of them in the present day. It is not known when this sheet was first published. It is believed to have been reissued many times,<sup>1</sup> and much used by Varley's pupils.—Allibone<sup>2</sup> mentions *Studies for Drawing Trees*, 4to, by J. Varley.

There is yet another book, entitled 'Observations on Colouring and Sketching from Nature,' which has been, erroneously, attributed to John Varley, both by the Messrs. Redgrave and by Mr. Gilchrist;<sup>3</sup> and it is possible that the mistake may have led to some depreciatory remarks by the latter on Varley's writings, which they do not deserve.

<sup>1</sup> A copy dated '1850,' which was eight years after Varley's death, has the address '3 Elkin's Row, Bayswater,' to which he went in 1830 or 1831. But it was probably drawn up many years before.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Authors*.

<sup>3</sup> See *Century of Painters*, i. 502; *Dictionary of the English School*; and *Life of Blake*, i. 296. The book in question is an octavo volume, of which a 'new and enlarged edition,' published in 1820 by W. Mason at Chichester, bears upon its title the author's name, 'William Varley.' It is rather a commonplace production, and may have been written by John's less distinguished artist-brother, William F. Varley before mentioned. The author speaks of his 'pupils' as having patronized the first edition. Another is dated 1830.



## CHAPTER IV

## LANDSCAPE; AND THE RISING SCHOOL

Biographies continued to 1820—Former exhibitors—*Stevens—De Wint—Turner—Copley Fielding—Scott*—New landscape painters—Their biographies—*David Cox—Charles Barber—Samuel Prout—G. F. Robson—H. C. Allport—William Walker—Miss Gouldsmith.*

ALTHOUGH the figure element had acquired more strength since the admission of oil pictures, the landscape painters still maintained their lead in the exhibitions at Spring Gardens; and the school founded by the veterans, whose lives have been the subject of the foregoing chapters, was being recruited by a younger generation of artists. Some of these had already obtained a footing in the old Society, while others had brought new blood to the resuscitated body. Both classes have now to be dealt with, in connexion with one or two artists who still belonged more exclusively to the ancestral age.

In the last waning group is FRANCIS STEVENS, who, it will be remembered, was one of the first body of Associates elected in December 1805 and became a Member of the old Society in May 1809. Wortley in Yorkshire had been, and continued to be, a place from which he took many of his rustic scenes; but in 1810 he mingles these with views near Norwich. In that year he had become a member of the Norwich Society of Artists. In the next he was living at Bromley in Kent. He was not one of the resuscitated body at Spring Gardens in 1813, but exhibited a few drawings as an 'outsider' in 1816 and 1819. In the former year he gives his address 'Military College, Sandhurst,' whence it may be inferred that he was employed in tuition there. In the latter, he is at 'New Buildings, Exeter.' During the past period he had etched a series of fifty-three or fifty-four picturesque *Views of Cottages and Farmhouses in England and Wales*, after drawings by his master, Munn, and by Varley, Hills, Pugin, Prout, and others, which were published in quarto by

Ackermann. There are editions dated 1808 and 1815. He has already been spoken of as one of the founders of the Sketching Society, in connexion with John and Alfred Chalon. A pencil portrait of him was sold at Christie's on 15 July, 1875, among the effects of Cornelius Varley, deceased.

PETER DE WINT had contributed to the strength of the exhibitions much more by the quality than the quantity of his works. His term of Membership had lasted but a year; and when the break occurred in 1812-13 he fell into the class of 'Exhibitors,' and thereafter sent no more than twenty-three drawings (or paintings) to Spring Gardens, his name being as often absent from as present in the catalogue. 'A Cricket Match,' exhibited in 1815, may be the fine drawing at South Kensington, presented to the Museum by Mr. Ellison in 1860. During this period the De Wints continued to reside in Percy Street, Rathbone Place, where the painter earned a sufficient maintenance for their moderate needs, by giving lessons as well as selling his works to private purchasers. He also began to draw for the publishers. In W. B. Cooke's *Picturesque Delineation of the Southern Coast of England*, celebrated chiefly for its prints after Turner, the first number of which was issued in 1814, there are six illustrations by De Wint. Two of them, views in the Isle of Wight ('Undercliff,' dated 1 June, 1814, and 'Blackgang Chine,' dated 1 April, 1816), are prints of the full size, the remainder ('Bognor,' 'Beach at Ventnor,' 'West Cowes Castle,' and 'Loggan Stone') being smaller ones inserted in the text. A view of 'Greenwich' exhibited in 1818 was drawn, the catalogue informs us, 'for Cooke's work of "Thames Scenery."' Probably it was 'The Thames from Greenwich Park (from a drawing in the possession of the Duke of Argyll),' engraved with date 1 June, 1822, in W. B. Cooke's *The Thames*, to which work, in its complete state,<sup>1</sup> De Wint contributed a dozen or more plates and vignettes, with dates from 1 May, 1814, to 1 Jan. 1829. But De Wint's day of fullest success was yet to come, when, a few years afterwards, he rejoined the Society as a Member.

Varley's pupil, WILLIAM TURNER, had remained a 'country Member,' living at or near Oxford, and from 1811 to 1815 giving

<sup>1</sup> In the first edition, 1811, the plates are all after S. Owen.

Varley's address as his place of business in town. He had had eighty-eight works in the gallery during his twelve years' connexion with the Society (eleven of them as a Member); and had been true to his native subjects, confining himself at first to views in his own and adjacent counties, and then wandering a little into Wales and round by the Lake country into Derbyshire. The affixes 'Evening,' 'Early Morning,' 'Twilight,' 'Showery Weather,' and so forth, to the titles of his drawings, indicate his watchful eye for atmospheric effects, and the choice of subjects often accords with his love of wider prospects favourable to the treatment of sky as the main motive of a picture.

When COPLEY FIELDING was made a Member of the new Society in 1812, and was thus no longer limited as to the number of his annual exhibits, he at once took the place of his good friend and instructor Varley, as the most prolific contributor to the gallery. From 1813 to 1820 Fielding acknowledges as his production the contents of 263 frames; and, as many of these contained from two to six separate subjects, his total number of drawings (or paintings) shown in these eight years was no less than 327; thus falling short by only three of Varley's total in the preceding eight years, from 1805 to 1812, and making an average of more than forty works a year. Varley, as we have said, had dropped to about thirteen per annum in the mixed exhibitions.

It was evident that Fielding had entered heart and soul into his profession. He had, moreover, settled himself in life by a happy marriage, in December 1813, with Mrs. John Varley's sister, Miss Susannah Gisbourne, a lady whose high principles, pious feeling, and sound judgment, with which were united a refined taste and some literary acquirements, enabled her to become a main support to her husband during the rest of his life.

There is a solitary drawing, the title of which, 'Pegwell Bay, Kent,' looks strangely out of place in the catalogue, at the head of a long list of Welsh and North-country views. It was doubtless a result of a visit paid in the previous year, 1812, *viâ* Canterbury to Ramsgate, where the Gisbourne family resided. Except that trip, he had that year confined his sketching to the neighbourhood of London. In 1813, however, he had also increased his stock of subjects by visits to Durham, Raby Castle, and Greta Bridge; whence came some



views exhibited in 1814, among them a set of six illustrations to Scott's poem of *Rokeby*. This tour was continued to Ambleside, up Weardale, to Aldstone Moor, and home by Newcastle. In November 1813 he was elected *Treasurer* for the ensuing year, 1814, when he again remained in London, and sketched on the Thames, having taken a house in the artist quarter, No. 15 Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square. For 1815, he was the Society's *Secretary*, and in that year he went again to draw from nature in North Wales. In 1816 he attacked the scenery of the Wye; and some views of Goodrich Castle appear among his gallery works in the year 1817.

Hitherto his drawings had been almost exclusively from North Wales<sup>1</sup> and the Lake District, the chief exceptions being those just mentioned, a few views, in 1816-17, for Havell's coloured aquatints of *Gentlemen's Seats*, and, rarely, a professed classical composition.<sup>2</sup> But an addition to his range of subjects was ere long to be forced upon him by domestic circumstances. He had now two daughters, the elder having been born in 1814. After the birth of the second, Mrs. Fielding, being very ill, had to be taken to Brighton in 1816; and the next year the doctors decreed that, for the health of the elder child, a permanent residence at the seaside was necessary. So the wife went to live at Sandgate, and as much time as the husband could spare from his professional engagements in London, he passed on the coast near her.

Up to his eighteenth year Copley Fielding had never seen the sea, his first cry of *Θάλασσα!* having been uttered on beholding it from a height near Ulverston, in our own *annus mirabilis* 1805. It is not surprising, therefore, that it took some further years of study, and of watching the waves in their endless variety, to develop the power and quality in marine painting which he afterwards displayed. Nor do we come yet to the misty chalk-down subjects whereby also he was so well known in his later time. In 1819 and 1820 he exhibited many views on the south coast of Kent, from Dover to Romney Marsh, along with his usual Welsh subjects.

The Associate WILLIAM SCOTT, of Brighton, sent forty drawings

<sup>1</sup> A coloured aquatint of 'St. Asaph,' dated 1 May, 1820, engraved by T. Fielding after C. V. Fielding, is in the *Northern Cambrian Mountains*, folio, 1820, pl. 37.

<sup>2</sup> There are: 'Inachus discovering his Daughter Io' (Ovid), 1814; 'Æneas on his Approach to the Entrance of the Infernal Regions' (*Æneid*, book vi.), 1816; 'Scene from Ariosto' (*Orlando Furioso*, book i.), 1817.

as 'Exhibitor' at the Oil and Water Colour gallery, chiefly views of cottages &c. in Sussex ; being absent once only, in 1817.

To the above artists, all of whom had belonged to the old Society, there were added in the oil and water colour exhibitions a further and virtually new group, who contributed worthily to the maintenance of the school of landscape. First and (measured by his subsequent services) foremost among these was DAVID COX, who, as above stated, had been elected an Associate of the old Society a few months before it was dissolved, and took his place as a Member of the new, at its first formation.

He was then twenty-nine ; about a year younger than Havell, five than John Varley, and eight than Turner was, and Girtin would have been had he been still alive. He had lived in or near London for the last eight years, during which, with no powerful connexions to aid him, he had, by perseverance and talent, succeeded in establishing a good position as a water-colour draftsman and a teacher of landscape. It was in the very birth-year, 1804, of the old Society, that young Cox, having just attained his majority, came to try his fortune in the metropolis, attracted partly by what proved a delusive hope, of getting some scenery to paint at Astley's circus ; for this was a branch of art in which he had already shown capacity in the theatre of his native town, having been carried into the scene-loft by the following chances.

David Cox was born in Heath Mill Lané, Deritend, a suburb of Birmingham, on the 29th of April, 1783, where his father, Joseph Cox, was a worker in iron, a maker among other things of gun-barrels and bayonets. To his mother, a woman of sense and religious feeling, and some education, David Cox was indebted for an early training in uprightness to which he was wont to attribute much of his success in after life. Her maiden name was Frances Walford. She was daughter of a farmer and miller of the same town. David was the younger of the two children of his parents' marriage ; the elder being a daughter, Mary Ann, who became the wife of Mr. Ward, a teacher of music at Manchester.

There are no stories to relate respecting him, of infantine rapture among green fields, or of a child's attempts to sketch from nature. When a little boy, he went to an elementary day school ; when bigger, to the free school in Birmingham. Probably he wandered

when he could, and enjoyed the healthy verdure of the midland scenery, within reach of home. A curious record, if genuine, of his schoolboy presence at one picturesque spot in his native county, is mentioned by Mr. Jenkins, who has left a memorandum, in the following words, among his papers: 'In the summer of 1852, I saw on the outer wall of Guy's Cliff Mill, Warwickshire, apparently cut with a knife, the name of "David Cox, 1795." As Cox was born in 1783, he could only have been about twelve years old when he cut his name on the stone, supposing it was cut by himself at the time.'<sup>1</sup>

Among Mr. Jenkins's papers there is also a pencil note, written, and given to him at a meeting of the Graphic Society, 10 January, 1866, by John Pye, the engraver, who was a fellow-townsmen of our artist's and nearly of the same age, in these words: 'When I first knew David Cox he was employed to wield the great hammer at a blacksmith's shop in Windmill Yard, Digbeth, Birmingham.'<sup>2</sup> It was in fact intended that he should follow his father's business; but, stout and hearty as he grew to be in after years, Cox had not as a boy the physique for a young Cyclops. And a fortunate accident befell him, which turned his course of life into a different channel. One night he caught his foot on the scraper at a door, and, falling, broke his leg. During the enforced confinement which ensued, he had some prints to amuse him. These he took to copying with pen or pencil. Then a cousin of his, whose name was Allport, gave him a box of paints, and he began to dabble in colour. Some of his little drawings found buyers; and, showing thus a natural proclivity, he was sent to a drawing school, then kept in the town by Joseph Barber, a well-known and competent teacher, where Pye was also a pupil. As he made good progress there, he was apprenticed in 1798 to one Fieldler, in what was called the 'toy trade,' his employment being to paint in miniature upon lockets, snuff-boxes, and the like. In Mr. Solly's *Life of David Cox* there is a photograph of a locket adorned by him with a boy's head, which shows that at the age of sixteen he had acquired considerable proficiency in the art. But his term of apprenticeship being abruptly closed by his master's suicide, he, in 1800, got

<sup>1</sup> This was not the only instance recorded of the painter's leaving his mark thus. Mr. Solly in his *Life of David Cox*, p. 11, relates that he cut his name with the date 1804 on one of the old staircases at Kenilworth Castle, which is not very far from Guy's Cliff.

<sup>2</sup> Cox has been heard to relate that when a very young man strolling in the country it was his habit to pick up any cast horseshoe lying in his way, and see whether it bore his father's private mark. (*Ex relatione* A. D. Fripp.)



an engagement at the theatre, helped thereto by the same cousin Allport who had given him his box of paints. Here he ground colours for the scene-painters, and loved to watch at his work their chief, De Maria, of whom he would afterwards speak as being an artist of considerable talent. In the evenings he again attended the drawing class of Joseph Barber.

When it came to be known in the theatre how Cox had been previously employed, he was allowed to try his hand upon some of the side scenes, particularly one in which figures had to be introduced; and one day a lucky chance of distinction presented itself. De Maria being absent, the manager was at his wits' end for a picture of the leading actress, in a piece whereof the plot (as in 'Masks and Faces') turned on an exhibition of the heroine's (*i.e.* the leading actress's) portrait. The young colour-grinder came to the rescue, painted Miss Decamp's likeness with complete success, and not only saved the piece, and was complimented by De Maria, but so won the manager's favour, that he engaged him as his scene-painter, when shortly afterwards the post came to be vacant.

Cox's employer at the Birmingham theatre was the elder Macready, father of the eminent tragedian W. C. Macready. He had other provincial theatres under his management at the same time; and for about four years our artist was attached to his company, going with them on circuit to 'Bristol, Leicester, Sheffield, Manchester, Liverpool,' and other places. On occasions he even trod the boards, and having been in the habit of jumping through his own scenes *à l'Arlequin*, by way of constitutional after his work, is said to have once gone the length, to accommodate the manager, of essaying the part of clown or pantaloon in a small country town. Mr. Jenkins relates, on the authority of two friends<sup>1</sup> who were present, how David Cox, when advanced in years, amused a little sociable party of artists, by going through the postures of Harlequin with much humour and spirit.

Cox used to express his regret that the scenery painted by De Maria had shared the fate of all such ephemeral works of art, and long since been destroyed. One might say the same of the efforts of his own brush in that department. But not entirely so. For there existed not many years ago, and perhaps still exist, a set of small scenes which he painted for a toy-theatre made for the amuse-

<sup>1</sup> The late W. Collingwood Smith, and Henry Jutsum.

ment of the manager's son, afterwards so distinguished, who was then a Rugby boy. For this little stage, the same hand that grew to paint that much admired work, 'Sheep changing the Pasture,' was then employed upon a miniature, but yet more interminable flock, that wound for ever on a roller on their way to an unseen market.

Young Cox was not altogether satisfied with the life led by his companions of the sock and buskin ; and as his good mother feared for his morals, he readily yielded to her scruples, and an appeal made by her to the sympathies of Mrs. Macready got him released from his engagement. Then he lived at home for a while, or made short sketching excursions, and finally journeyed south under the attraction of an offer from Astley, the circus proprietor, who had seen his work at the Birmingham theatre, to give him employment if he came to London. His watchful mother brought him to town in 1804, and found him board and quiet lodging at a respectable widow's in Lambeth, not far from the amphitheatre. But the promised engagement there came to nothing,<sup>1</sup> he having been forestalled by other painters. So he employed himself in making drawings for sale at the print shops, sketching for that purpose in the neighbourhood of London.

Palser, who had then a shop in the Westminster Road close by, was one of his customers, and there he saw and was able to measure his strength by the works of the leaders of the school, Varley, Havell, and Glover. The dealers bought small studies in Indian ink or sepia from him at two guineas the dozen, the same price, be it remembered, which young 'Thaddeus of Warsaw' Cotman had ventured to ask in Great Newport Street ten years before. They served to supply the country drawing masters with what, by a common ambiguous inversion of terms, are called 'copies,' that is to say, instructive models for pupils to copy *from*. A young Birmingham friend of Cox's, who followed him to London, was indeed a copyist in both senses of the word, for of these little drawings he made repetitions, which our artist kindly allowed him to sell in the same market. He afterwards pursued this second-hand branch of art as his profession, and was known in Rome for many years as Richard Evans, a copier of pictures by old masters.

<sup>1</sup> That he did some work for Astley is assumed in the following anecdote, which is told as a trait of that celebrated manager's eccentric character. Cox is said to have painted 'a drum, which being in perspective only, showed *one* head. Astley insisted that a drum had *two* heads.' He 'was not to be convinced, and had the drum painted with two heads by David Cox.' (J. J. J. MSS.)

Cox had another frequent companion in his sketching, namely Charles Barber, a son of his drawing master Joseph Barber. He had worked with him at Birmingham both in field and studio, and he too came to London on the strength of his friend's example. In the next year, 1805, these two went together on an artist trip to North Wales. David Cox must then have seen the opening exhibition of the Water-Colour Society in the Brook Street Rooms, and had in fresh recollection the works there by Varley and Havell, artists whom we are told he particularly admired.<sup>1</sup> They, no doubt, had their influence on the spirit of his first contemplation of the mountain scenery dear to him in after life, of which he was to become in the end so great an exponent. Some of the subjects of Cox's sketches during this tour are named in Mr. Solly's elaborate memoir. He says they are 'rather slight; some only in outline, and others tinted with Indian ink, good in composition, but without much effect.' Mr. Hall mentions one in pen-and-ink, with the date 'July 17th, 1805.'<sup>2</sup> In 1806, Cox went again to Wales, probably early in the year, and tried a little colouring on the spot, with 'indigo, gamboge, purple lake, and sepia, dissolved in bottles,' and a result 'low in tone but truthful, and somewhat in the manner of Barret and Varley.'<sup>3</sup>

Evidently, however, he was early impressed with the perception that landscape art is something more than mere copying from nature. He listened to the advice of a friendly dealer, one Simpson, of Greek Street, Soho, at whose shop he had been in the habit of disposing of his drawings, that he should copy from old masters also. He was allowed to come there, and make a landscape in water-colours after a fine picture by Gaspar Poussin. Applying that master's method of treatment to a sketch of his own of Kenilworth Castle, he thus produced a large drawing, still preserved, which a photograph in Mr. Solly's book shows to be a work of no ordinary beauty. In employing this excellent practical method of learning his art, he was but following the advice of Sir Joshua Reynolds, who has said, in his second Discourse: 'What I would propose is that you should enter into a kind of competition, by painting a similar subject and making a companion to any picture that you consider as a model. . . . The true principles of painting will mingle with your thoughts.' To aid him in such studies

<sup>1</sup> Hall's *Biography of Cox*, p. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Solly's *Life of Cox*, p. 17. Hall's *Biography*, p. 16.

<sup>3</sup> Solly's *Life of Cox*, pp. 17, 18.



he bought a set of Pond's brown facsimiles of drawings by Poussin, Claude, and Salvator Rosa, which he is said to have used in after life also for reference as to composition and the massing of light and shade.<sup>1</sup> Nor did he neglect the instruction to be derived from contemporary artists. Keenly alive to the splendid quality of Turner's genius,<sup>2</sup> he made, out of his very slender means, what doubtless turned out a profitable investment, by becoming one of the first subscribers to the *Liber Studiorum*, the opening number of which celebrated work appeared in 1807.

Desiring also to add precept to example, as a means of advancement in his art, he resolved to get a few lessons from the best living teacher he could find. Happily for him, he selected John Varley. His treatment by that good and generous artist has been recorded in nearly the same words by both of Cox's biographers. After giving him a few lessons at ten shillings apiece, Varley, having heard that his pupil was an artist by profession—though, on being questioned, he modestly declared that he was only trying to be one—refused to take more of his money. 'I shall be happy,' said Varley, 'to give you any advice or assistance in my power; and I hope you will come here and see me draw as often as you please.'

Cox still did a little work as a scene-painter, for which he got space in a builder's yard close by, belonging to his landlady's son-in-law, Mr. Hills, who kindly set him up a frame and hoardings. Here he painted some scenery for provincial theatres at Swansea and Wolverhampton at four shillings the square yard. Works by the same hand, observes Mr. Solly, have lately been competed for at 'some thousand pounds per yard.' He also had some commissions at what is now the Surrey Theatre, and was then the Royal Circus. That for Wolverhampton appears to have been painted in the summer or autumn of 1807.

The year 1808 was an era in his life. In it he married the eldest<sup>3</sup> of his landlady's three daughters, Mary Ragg, who proved a devoted and excellent wife. They took a small cottage 'at the corner of Dulwich Common, just passing the College on the road to the right,'<sup>4</sup> in what was then a country spot, frequented by gipsies, and abounding

<sup>1</sup> Solly's *Life of Cox*, p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> An interesting drawing made by Cox as a lesson to a pupil, Lady Arden, in recollection of Turner's 'Kingston Bank' (now in the National Gallery), which he had just seen, was in his son's collection. (Solly's *Life of Cox*, pp. 28, 29.)

<sup>3</sup> She was about eight years older than her husband.

<sup>4</sup> Solly's *Life of Cox*, p. 20.

in other picturesque matter, now supplanted by bricks and mortar. There he sketched and worked at his easel, his bride sitting by him the while, and reading him a tale, or more often a book of biography or travel. But he was not as easily satisfied as she with what he produced, and he quietly put many a drawing, condemned by his own less enamoured judgment, down a convenient grating in the gutter, lest she should save it from destruction.

He, however, adopted his wife's suggestion, in endeavouring to get a few pupils, and a card was put up in the window inscribed with the words, 'Perspective taught here.' An aspiring carpenter and builder was the first to swallow the bait. But some ingenious friend persuaded the would-be professor that, well as he might have caught the trick of deceiving the eye of a sitter in the dress circle, his scene-painter's perspective would not qualify him for a teacher without some knowledge of Euclid. So, to prepare himself for the pupil's coming, he plunged headlong into a study of the ancient geometer. That he got safely over the *pons asinorum* there is no reason to doubt; but the road beyond opening out to him a vista in a kind of perspective for which he had small relish, he for once lost his patience, and flung the book to the other end of the room. It went through the lath-and-plaster wall, and was seen no more. 'And,' said old David when he told the story, 'there it is now.' But he obtained pupils, and of higher rank than the first. His drawings at Palser's caught the eye of the Hon. H. Windsor, colonel and amateur, and afterwards Earl of Plymouth, who sought him out and not only took some lessons from him, but got him aristocratic pupils at the West-end of town.<sup>1</sup> At first his terms were five shillings a lesson. Afterwards they rose to ten. Every year, from that after his marriage, when David junior, his only child, was born, he went to see his parents, and sketch near his old home. There was a dealer there, a Mr. Everitt, who bought his drawings, and to whose son he gave some lessons.

Cox, as we have seen, was one of the rising water-colour painters who took advantage of the general exhibition opened by the Associated Artists, to offer his drawings to public criticism. It was in their second season, 1809, when they removed to New Bond Street, that he first became an Exhibitor. His ten drawings

<sup>1</sup> Lady Arden, Lady Burrell, Lady Sophia Cecil, Lady Gordon, the Hon. Misses Eden, and Miss Tylney Long had all the additional honour of being among Cox's early pupils. (Solly's *Life of Cox*, p. 22.)

were very favourably received, and declared to display 'high originality.' A contemporary critic, apparently of good taste, adds, 'There is much truth and force in his pictures ; but his skies seem to be composed of the same material as the landscape, and assimilate so exactly with the ground that it is hard to tell where one leaves off and the other begins.'<sup>1</sup> Recollecting how material an element in our artist's works are the 'brave o'erhanging canopy' and breezy clouds, and how complete their union with the subject in hand, one may perhaps detect some unconscious praise in the above observation.

The next year, 1810, he is President of the Association, with a set of thirty-seven drawings ; and his works, according to the same review, 'are characterized by a sportive simplicity, and airiness of touch, and a judicious management of light and shadow, happily productive of those evanescent appearances which are peculiar to the cloudy atmosphere of England. He has a certain wildness of imagination which delights in the solitary scenes of nature, and a facility in tracing the general and familiar features of landscape. His great fault is a careless haste and sketchiness of finish, by which [his] works betray, on a close inspection, the coarseness of scene-painting.'<sup>2</sup> It is entertaining to read the record of impressions made by the first seen works of artists whose names, then new to the little world of art, are now 'familiar in our mouths as household words.' Cox filled the President's chair for one year only, but remained an 'associated Member' until the collapse of the Bond Street Society in 1812, when, as before related, he sustained the unfortunate loss of his drawings under the distress for rent. During the four seasons of his connexion with that Association he had exhibited 103 works. The subjects were nearly all either views in North Wales (chiefly castles at first), or picturesque scenes (cottages, river-side bits and the like), within easy reach of his homes in Warwickshire or Surrey. In 1810 there is an 'Ouse Bridge at York,' and in 1811 a sketch of 'Bath Minster ;' but these are exceptional. Several of his drawings, which had been seized for the Association's rent, were bought, at the forced sale which ensued, by the late Mr. J. Allnutt, of Clapham Common, and sold by that gentleman's executors in 1861.

Cox was still residing at Dulwich in 1813, when his name first appeared among the painters in oil and water colours exhibiting at

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*, i. 493.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 433.



'Wigley's Rooms.' In the previous spring he had taken his wife and child to Hastings, and sketched there, as above mentioned, with William Havell, whose influence had, no doubt, its due weight in his election as an Associate in June 1812. Coast subjects, studied at that time, appear among his drawings in the gallery for some years after. Otherwise his exhibited drawings during his first two seasons at Spring Gardens are mostly views such as he had shown in Bond Street about the London Thames and Dulwich Common, with a few from Wales, some corn and hay fields, and unnamed subjects in morning, twilight, or midday sun.

During this and the following years, Cox employed a part of his time in the preparation of a series of practical works containing prints to be used as models for students. The first of them was entitled, *A Treatise on Landscape Painting and Effect in Water Colours*. It was first published as a folio volume by Messrs. S. and J. Fuller of Rathbone Place in 1814; and there were several subsequent editions, one at least as late as 1841. The book contains twenty-five pages of soft ground etchings, and thirty-two of aquatinted drawings, some of the latter of which, in imitation of sepia, are compositions of much power and beauty.

In 1815, the year of Waterloo, Cox's drawings might be sought for in vain at Wigley's Rooms. His name alone is in the list, with the new and rather startling address, 'Military College, Farnham.' There was, nevertheless, little of the soldier about 'Farmer Cox,' as Turner called him. When his name was drawn for the militia, a few years before, he had avoided service by making himself scarce. But the prospect of an assured income, and the representations of a friend, Andrew Wilson, one of his fellow-exhibitors among the ill-fated 'Associated Artists,' who had become a drawing master at Sandhurst College, had induced him to accept a like appointment. But our artist was not the man to be shelved in such an establishment, like some above named, or to waste his strength on maps for the game of war. Finding the occupation and the restraints of discipline alike distasteful, 'Captain Cox,' as he was by courtesy styled (like the hatter in the musical farce), was only too glad to be soon released, and allowed to join his wife and child, from whom he had been parted by the required residence in college.

It was in a less rigid school, and in the training for a gentler life, that the tutorial talent of David Cox was reserved for employment.

In the following year<sup>1</sup> he was installed as drawing master, at 100*l.* per annum, to Miss Croucher's seminary for young ladies at Hereford, where he had to instruct the pupils not only in landscape drawing, but heads and hands, and flower painting, and 'bronzing on white wood in Chinese fashion,' whatever that process may have been. It was, however, on two days only in the week that he had to be thus employed, and it may easily be imagined that the charms of a country life, and proximity to the scenery of the Wye, were more than compensation for the drudgery, such as it was ; not to mention the liberty accorded him of taking other pupils in the neighbourhood. He soon obtained such engagements in the town, taught drawing at the grammar school, and at another establishment for young ladies kept by Miss Poole, and had private pupils among the county families round about.

The epoch of his taking up his residence at Hereford is assigned by Mr. Solly as that which closed the first period of his art, when he was more under the influence of the old masters, and of Girtin, Varley, and Barret, and less of an original student of nature than he now became. The foliage and general colour are low in tone, and the effect fine but more obviously studied.

Removed to Hereford with his belongings, Cox became, and remained for many years, one of the 'country members' of our Society (like Turner of Oxford), and of necessity unable to take any active part in the management of its affairs. But he came to town, through Birmingham, yearly, to look after his own interests, see the exhibitions, and give a lesson or two, and perhaps sell a drawing, to an old pupil. At the same time he was contributing with increasing strength to the wealth and attractions of the gallery. From the year 1816 his contributions include many views in his new neighbourhood, where he had congenial scenery to study, and whence the subjects of some of his most important pictures are taken. In that year he exhibited a drawing of the Fish Market at Hastings, which was painted on a commission kindly given him by his pupil, Lady Arden, to help to enable him to defray the expenses of the removal to Hereford. It

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Solly assigns to Cox's removal to Farnham the year 1813, and to Hereford 1814 ; and Mr. Hall adopts the latter date, at least, without question. But the addresses given in the catalogues of the Society are evidence that the biographers are a year behind in these dates ; a supposition partially confirmed by a mistake of the former's in calling the artist's drawings of 1814 'his first contributions.' Moreover he speaks, in another place, of 1815 as the year following the first-named removal. (Cf. Solly's *Life of David Cox*, pp. 29, 31, 34 ; and Hall's *BioGRAPHY of David Cox*, p. 27.)

was a subject that had already done good service under the hands of Heaphy and Cristall respectively.

In 1817 he made, on commission, a series of views of Bath, at four guineas each,<sup>1</sup> some of which were afterwards published;<sup>2</sup> but was prevented by a serious illness from contributing to the Society's exhibition.

A 'View on the River Lugg, near Hereford,' in 1818, is spoken of by Mr. Solly as an important work.<sup>3</sup> In that year he made another excursion to North Wales. In 1819 he returned thither, and also visited Bath. With the exception of 1815, when he was at Farnham, and 1817, when he was ill, he exhibited yearly during the Spring Gardens period—seventy-nine drawings in all.

While living at Hereford, Cox was further engaged in continuing the system of instruction which he had begun in his *Treatise on Landscape*. This work was followed in 1816 by a series of plates, entitled, '*Progressive Lessons on Landscape for Young Beginners*, by David Cox, Member of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours,<sup>4</sup> Spring Gardens, 1816.' These were issued by the same firm, and intended to be introductory to the 'Treatise' already published. They consist of twenty-four plates of soft-ground etchings, designed as models for pencil drawing, beginning with one of simple lines, followed by seven of rustic architecture, castles, timbered houses &c., in outline, four of palings, stones, foreground plants &c., six of different kinds of trees, and six single plates of carts &c., rustic figures, poultry, sheep, cows, and horses. Contemporary, as it seems, with the last-mentioned work, was another, occupying an intermediate position between it and the 'Treatise,' but published by a different firm (T. Clay, No. 18 Ludgate Hill), and entitled, *A Series of Progressive Lessons, intended to elucidate the Art of Landscape Painting in Water Colours*.<sup>5</sup> This was not the last book of the kind which Cox published. He afterwards,

<sup>1</sup> T. Bunce's *Catalogue of the Exhibition of Birmingham Engravers*, 1877.

<sup>2</sup> *Six Views in the City of Bath*, engraved from Cox's drawings. S. and J. Fuller, Rathbone Place, London, 1820.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Cox*, p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> He sinks the oil element in the Society's title.

<sup>5</sup> In the fourth edition, dated 1820, the words, 'with Introductory Illustrations on Perspective,' are added; and it contains a preliminary chapter thereon, with three diagram plates inscribed with that date. The seven original plates bear date 1 August, 1816, presumably that of the first edition. One of these is a soft-ground etching containing four little views to show the meaning of the terms 'point of sight,' 'horizon,' &c., and the remainder are aquatints; four of which are printed twice each, and issued plain (in Indian Ink or Neutral Tint) and coloured; and the other two presented in a coloured state only. The letterpress is chiefly confined to technical instruction.



as we shall see, issued more than one set of entirely different plates under a similar title, the use of which creates confusion as to their dates.

Cox's young Birmingham friend and fellow-sketcher, who went with him on his first trip to Wales in 1805, was the same CHARLES BARBER who was elected an Associate at the same time with him, in June 1812. Like Cox, he was too late to exercise his privilege of exhibiting with the untransformed Society, but he did not, like his companion, join the 'Oil and Water Colour' as a full Member. He, too, had sent works to the Bond Street Gallery, as an Exhibitor in 1810, and as a Member in 1811 and 1812. His name leaves only a faint impression on the annals of our Society. He exhibited but eight works at Spring Gardens between 1813 and 1816. In the last-mentioned year he had left Birmingham and was settled at Liverpool, where he became a teacher and eventually president of the local Institute, and died in January 1854. His friendship with Cox endured through life, and they often met at Bettws in after years.

The name of SAMUEL PROUT, which makes its first appearance in the year 1815, is familiar to all, as one of the leading group, to which Hunt and Cox and De Wint belong, in the Society's palmy days. He had not yet developed the peculiar style, or attempted the higher class of subjects, by which he is most popularly known. To him, as to his brother sketchers, the Continent had hitherto been closed. The long war indeed was now in its last year, and in a few more seasons Europe would be overrun by British artists, Prout among the number. Till then he was in a prior and distinct stage of his career; in what might in the language of the architectural antiquary be called the 'Early English' period, which in his case preceded the 'Norman.' But the works he had already produced afforded ample testimony to the soundness and vigour of his art.

He was born on the 17th of September, 1783, at Plymouth.<sup>1</sup> What his father's occupation was is not known with certainty, but it is believed to have been unconnected with art, which he, like so many parents mentioned in this chronicle, held to be an idle amusement.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. S. C. Hall, in *Retrospect of a Long Life*, ii. 211, writes: 'In the autumn of 1882, I visited at Plymouth the street in which Samuel Prout was born in 1783. The house itself has been pulled down; in it his father carried on the trade of a bookseller.' Whether the last allegation be correct is open to doubt.

Of the son the old story is related, that a love of drawing, too strong to resist, became at length the object of a life's licensed devotion.

An event which occurred when the child was but four or five years old, may have rendered the guardians less obdurate in thwarting his inclination. Being out nutting one hot day, alone, he had a bad sunstroke, was found 'moaning under a hedge, and brought home insensible.' Delicate to begin with, his health was ever after a serious bar to active occupation. 'From that day forward,' writes a biographer<sup>1</sup> to whom he himself related the circumstances, 'he was subject to attacks of violent pain in the head, recurring at short intervals, and until thirty years after marriage not a week passed without one or two days of absolute confinement to his room or to his bed.'

As he grew a little older, his boyish taste was not left without recognition or sympathy. He was fortunate in being placed under a kind schoolmaster, who was gentle with him when, seduced by the charm of his pencil, he neglected his task; and who encouraged him to draw with greater care. It is told how the genial preceptor put him by his side, and lent him his own pen to make a study of the cat. The boy also found models in the carts and horses that stopped at the public-house opposite his home; and he copied what prints he could get. When old enough he went to the Plymouth Grammar School, and there too found a friend<sup>2</sup> in the head master, the Rev. John Bidlake, D.D., who, himself an amateur, took a practical interest in his artistic progress, and made him his companion in delightful excursions amidst the lovely scenery of their neighbourhood.

At Dr. Bidlake's school he had a young comrade as enthusiastic as himself in the pursuit of art; namely, Benjamin Robert Haydon, a little more than two years his junior. The world is too familiar with that artist's painful story. He was then in the spring-tide of his hope. The hand that first recorded, and finally brought to their bitter end, the high aspirations of his troubled life, was pleasantly employed with Prout's in sketching round Mount Edgcumbe, and about the green lanes and sunny shores of beauteous Devon. 'Prout devoted whole days from dawn till night,' says Mr. Ruskin,<sup>3</sup> 'to the study of the peculiar objects of his early interest, the ivy-mantled

<sup>1</sup> John Ruskin (*Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849).

<sup>2</sup> It is assumed that the friend before mentioned was a different person, for he is described, without name, as the boy's 'first schoolmaster.' (*Art Journal*, *ubi supra*.)

<sup>3</sup> *Ubi supra*.

bridges, mossy water-mills, and rock-built cottages, which characterize the valley scenery' of that county. The picturesque shipping craft about Plymouth Dock afforded endless subjects for his pencil. On one memorable occasion, an ill wind to many brought a veritable godsend to the brother sketchers.

On the 26th of January, 1796, a large East Indiaman, the *Dutton*, then chartered as a transport with troops for the West Indies, was cast ashore under the citadel, and its wreck broke up on the beach. The accident proved a source of honour to more than one person. It gave a baronetcy to the gallant Sir Edward Pellew (afterwards Lord Exmouth), whose great personal courage saved the crew ; and who was permitted ever after to use as his crest the effigy of a stranded ship. But artists in these early days were not so honoured, nor were even knighthoods conferred upon painters in water-colours. In recording their assistance on this occasion, our humble sketchers could not hope to invoke the aid of the limner to the Heralds' College. They had to ply their own pencils instead. The incident nevertheless was to contribute to the fame of one of them, as well as the intrepid mariner. The tale must be told in the words of the eminent writer already quoted. 'The wreck held together for many hours under the cliff, rolling to and fro as the surges struck her. Haydon and Prout sat on the crags together and watched her vanish fragment by fragment into the gnashing foam. Both were equally awestruck at the time ; both, on the morrow, resolved to paint their first pictures ; both failed, but Haydon, always incapable of acknowledging and remaining loyal to the majesty of what he had seen, lost himself in vulgar thunder and lightning. Prout struggled to some resemblance of the actual scene, and the effect upon his mind was never effaced.'<sup>1</sup> The 'strong and lasting impression made upon him' by the scene became the motive of some noble drawings made many years after, and admired in the London galleries.

There was little in common between Prout and Haydon, except their love of art ; and when afterwards both settled in London, they were on friendly but never very familiar terms. But their earlier acquaintance was productive of other important results to Samuel Prout. Haydon's father was a bookseller in Plymouth, and kept a reading-room. There, some of the persons of the place who had literary and artistic tastes used to congregate ; among them Dr.

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849, p. 77.



Bidlake, a drawing master named S. Williams, and divers *protégés* of the good Doctor's. And there, John Britton, the topographic architectural antiquary, coming to Plymouth for a few days, in December 1801, on his way to Cornwall to collect materials for his *Beauties of England and Wales*, found himself in this little coterie, and made the acquaintance of Samuel Prout, then a young man of eighteen.

'This party,' says Britton, in a graphic account of his relations with our artist,<sup>1</sup> 'interested me in an extraordinary manner, for the master and his pupils seemed imbued with one feeling, one ruling passion—a love of literature and art. Wishing to have drawings of buildings and scenes in Cornwall for the "*Beauties of England*," I offered to take Mr. Prout with me into that county and pay his expenses. His parents cheerfully agreed to this proposal, and the youth was delighted with an anticipated treat. My intention was to enter at Saltash at the south-east corner of the county, walk thence to the Land's End, calling at and examining towns, seats, ancient buildings, and remarkable objects on or near to the line of the main public road. Unfortunately for the pedestrian author and artist, neither of whom was hardy or robust in constitution, the time of year was unpropitious, and we had to encounter rain, snow, cold, and other accompanying unpleasanties. Our first day's walk was from Plymouth to St. Germain's, through a heavy fall of snow. On reaching the latter borough town, our reception at the inn was not calculated to afford much comfort, or a pleasant presage for the peripatetics through Cornwall in winter. The small room into which we were shown certainly had a fireplace, and something like a fire; at least there was abundance of smoke, which seemed to prefer the apartment to the chimney. It was truly miserable. Our approach to the bedroom was by a flight of stone steps, on the outside of the house. The object of visiting this place was to draw and describe the old parish church, which is within the grounds of the seat of Port Elliot, belonging to Lord Elliot. Prout's first task was to make a sketch of the west end of this building, which is of early Norman architecture, with two towers, one of which is square, the other octagonal. Between these is a large semicircular doorway with several receding arches, but there is very little of other detail. My young artist was, however, sadly embarrassed, not knowing where to begin, how to settle the perspective, or deter-

<sup>1</sup> Communicated to the *Builder*, 29 May 1852, x. 339-340.

mine the relative proportions of the heights and widths of parts. He continued before the building for four or five hours, and at last his drawing was so inaccurate in proportion and detail, that it was unfit for engraving. This was a mortifying beginning both to the author and to the artist. He began another sketch the next morning, and persevered at it nearly the whole day ; but still failed to obtain such a drawing as I could have engraved. His next attempt was the church tower of Probus, an enriched and rather elaborate specimen of Cornish architecture. It is built of the moor stone of the county, and is adorned with quatrefoil panelling between string-courses in the different stories, niches in the walls, pinnacled buttresses enriched with crockets and finials, and with large blank windows having mullions and tracery. A sketch of this was a long day's work ; and, though afterwards engraved, reflected no credit on the author or the artist. The poor fellow cried, and was really distressed, and I felt as acutely as he possibly could, for I had calculated on having a pleasing companion in such a dreary journey, and also to obtain some correct and satisfactory sketches.<sup>1</sup> On proceeding further, we had occasion to visit certain Druidical monuments, vast rocks, monastic wells, and stone crosses, on the moors north of Liskeard. Some of these objects my young friend delineated with smartness and tolerable accuracy.

'We proceeded on to St. Austell, and from thence to Ruan Lanyhorne, where we found comfortable and happy quarters in the house of the Rev. John Whitaker,<sup>2</sup> the historian of Manchester, and the author of several other literary works. Here we sojourned six days, and quite luxuriated in the comforts of a warm house, a warm reception, and converse of a learned man who had associated with a Johnson, a Gibbon, and a Goldsmith, and other literary comets of the age.' The rector, who, isolated among the cottagers, fishermen, and miners, spent his time in supporting 'Church and King,' by writing articles for the *British Critic* and *Anti-Jacobin Review*, favoured the tourists, on the Sunday, with an archæological sermon, unintelligible to the rest of the congregation. Prout returned his hospitality by presenting as tokens of remembrance to the two Miss Whitakers, 'agreeable and kind' young ladies of about sixteen and eighteen, some of the sketches

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the sensitiveness of the humble art student and that of the autobiographic antiquary were not exactly alike in quality.

<sup>2</sup> Born at Manchester about 1735, was rector of Ruan for thirty years, and was buried there in 1808.

he made during his stay. Britton describes these (five or six) sketches as 'pleasing and truly picturesque.' One of them 'included the church, the parsonage, some cottages mixing with trees, the waters of the river Fal, the moors in the distance, and a fisherman's ragged cot in the foreground, raised against, and mixing with, the mass of rocks.' There were 'also a broken boat, with nets, sails, &c., in the foreground.'

'The next halting-place was Truro, the principal town of the county, where Prout made a sketch of the church, a large building in an open space surrounded by houses. Here again he was embarrassed with the mullioned windows and other architectural parts, and also with a large extent of iron railing that surrounded the building.' This failure seems to have been the last straw that broke the back of Prout's sketching engagement with Mr. Britton. 'At this place,' continued the latter, 'we parted; I to proceed on foot westward towards the Land's End, &c., and Prout to return by coach to Plymouth. This parting was on perfectly good terms, though exceedingly mortifying to both parties; for his skill as an artist had been impeached, and I had to pay a few pounds for a speculation which completely failed.'

Poor Prout described his sorrowful journey home, and how he employed himself on his return, in a grateful letter to Britton, from which the following is an extract: 'On Friday morning, after an unpleasant journey, I arrived at Plymouth, not without feeling much fatigue; the coach being bad, but the roads worse. The weather have been very unpleasant. I hope the latter part of your journey has proved better than the former. The remembrance of Ruan will never be eradicated from my memory. I am at present very busy learning perspective.<sup>1</sup> When better qualified to draw buildings, I will visit Launceston, Tavistock, &c., and try to make some correct sketches which may be proper for the "Beauties." My father is much obliged for your attentions to me, as I am, though conscious of my unworthiness. I hope you will favour me soon with the loan of a portfolio of drawings which you kindly promised to lend me to copy.'

The connexion did not end here, but was fraught with future benefit to both. Prout was as good as his word, and so was Britton.

<sup>1</sup> Possibly this was the occasion of his being 'allowed to have a few lessons from' the 'local teacher, S. Williams,' before mentioned, as stated by the Messrs. Redgrave (*Century of Painters*, ii. 488). It is not very clear what direct instruction in art, if any, young Prout may have received. William Payne, we know, was then practising at Plymouth, but he was not then the celebrated drawing master that he afterwards became.



After a year's work our artist had so far improved 'in perspective lines, proportion and architectural details,' that in May 1802 he was able to send to his patron a portfolio of sketches, which 'created a sensation with lovers of art.' And Prout received so many offers of encouragement that he determined to try his fortune in London.

Britton was then residing in Wilderness Row, Clerkenwell. There Prout became an inmate, and 'had his board and lodging for about two years.' 'The immediate effect of this change of position,' says Ruskin, 'was what might easily have been foretold, upon a mind naturally sensitive, diffident, and enthusiastic. It was a heavy discouragement. The youth felt that he had much to eradicate, and more to learn, and hardly knew at first how to avail himself of the advantages presented by the study of the works of Turner, Girtin, Cozens and others.' For Britton had placed before him the best drawings and sketches he possessed, by Turner, Alexander, Mackenzie, Cotman, and others, and of these he employed him in making copies while he remained under his roof. Sometimes he took him to the studio of Benjamin West, and on one occasion the worthy President of the Academy 'gave him most valuable and practical advice on the principles of light and shadow, by making a drawing of a ball or globe' with 'all the gradations' so as to show the way of 'exhibiting rotund bodies on flat surfaces.' The lesson was 'given in a few minutes, and accompanied by such theoretical and kind remarks as served to characterize the master, and make indelible impression on the head and heart of the pupil. Prout often referred to this important interview with gratitude and delight.' Britton also introduced him to Northcote, who, 'being a native of the same county, delighted in talking about Devonshire, its artists, scenery, &c.' In him 'Prout found a valuable and instructive companion and adviser.'

In 1803 and 1804 Prout was sent by his patron 'to visit the counties of Cambridge, Essex, and Wilts, to make sketches and studies of buildings, monuments, and scenery,' and accomplished his task, both as to the drawings he made and the manuscript notes by which they were accompanied, to the entire satisfaction of his employer. Some of the subjects are engraved in the 'Beauties,' and some in Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*.

But Prout had to contend with a more persistent foe than the unripeness of his faculty. His delicate health deprived him of the energy required to prosecute his studies with due effect. He was

often prostrated by bilious headaches. And in 1805, mainly for this reason, he returned to his home in Devonshire.

The following letter, written by him to Britton, gives an interesting picture of the writer and his occupations on his return to Devonshire. The original is in a collection of autographs in the possession of Mr. Robert Hampson, who has kindly lent it for publication :—

‘Plymouth Oct. 16th ’05

‘Dear Sir,—I am just returned after a months visit to the Dartmoors. I feel much strength from the influence of its pure air, and little Prout stands as firm as a Lion. My object has not been so much to make sketches as to find health. She lives on the highest torrs. I have her blessing.

‘The subjects in my portfolio are generally rock-scenery, most of them colord and highly finished from nature. In my excursions on the moor from Torr-royal I saw several stone crosses, but most of them very plain. Piles of stone, *very like* cromlechs, but probably only known to the tinnors or shepherds for shelter. I must not omit the mention of one days adventure in particular: A gentleman and myself, in spite of every remonstrance took horses to explore some parts of the moor, which is destitute of any habitation. To the surprize of many, our resolution carried us over its dangers and difficulties for twelve miles, not a trace of any road or footstep. I cannot describe the scenery as it impressed my mind. Masses of rock (to which the Cheezewring is a pebble) crowning every hill and broken in the valley, like the desolated ruins of an extensive city—bogs two and three miles in width—angry rivers foaming over broken paths of rock, awfully grand of itself, but as a whole more so from the terrific and savage wildness of its hills and vales. We found more trouble to lead our horses, than in finding our own safety. I was at the rise of the East and West Oak, Taw, and Dart rivers. Night coming on—our fears troubling lest a mist should close on us, made us haste our steps to something like civilization—a moor-cottage—but these are far from it in many respects. Unexpectedly we saw a very curious druidical circle (a proof with the crosses that Dartmoor was once at least partially inhabited, and might be known to the ancient-Brittons). I had not time to sketch, but it was *double*, each circle of about thirty stones, most of which were standing, and of the same proportion as the Hurlers—thus’ (here follows a plan of two

circles touching)—‘tis very perfect, and very *conspicuous*. The surface of the moor is generally marked with rock of various sizes, but where the circles remain, scarce a chance stone is seen for a quarter of a mile. I was much pleased with the slight observance of it, but sorry I was so circumstanced that every moment was precious for our safety. I have made sketches of the vale at Lidford, Oakhampton and castle, the cross and chapel at South-Zeal, Crediton, the Logan-stone, &c. Cold rains now keep me within doors, my time is industriously filled in preparations for a school, when settled I am at your service, and will forward something for the Beauties. I was much mortified to see my name at Frogmore. I hope you will not forget the impressions (large paper) from the B. E. W. I left a list with you of such as I have not. Do not forget Oakhampton Castle. I have begun my additions to the Devon and Cornwall. I long to see the second part of your antiquities. Still poor, but little better in hope, cannot afford to take in your numbers, but by the favour of two good impressions of the W. end of K. C. Chapel. In the private drawer of the desk I left a profile in a black frame which I will thank you to send as soon as possible to Longmans, who can forward it to me by John’s parcel. Exeter must be left till the Spring. Cornwall must be left also. Sad complaints at Plymouth that the Beauties are always behind the other periodical publications. Kind Remb<sup>ce</sup> to *Mrs. Britton*, and Mr. Pasquier, also to Mr. and Mrs. Brayley with Mr. Jones—tell Mr. B. I shall write him soon. When you see Satchwell present my *best* respects. Perhaps you will enclose a few lines with the frame I have requested you to send. A little London news will be *very* acceptable. I still am tormented with a great partiality to the great city, the hope of ever seeing it again is on a slight foundation. Be so good as to drop the enclosed in the twopenny post.

‘Yr<sup>s</sup> sincerely

‘S. PROUT JUN<sup>R</sup>.’

Much of the result of all this touring and sketching is preserved in the publications above mentioned. To the *Beauties of England and Wales*, Prout contributed, or had a share in contributing, about twenty-six plates, which bear dates from 1803 to 1813. Nine of them are in the Devon volume (with dates to 1809), but two-thirds of these are done by other artists (Shepherd, J. C. Smith, Thompson, and Arnald) from his sketches. In the Essex volume (1804 to 1807) there are seven



by Prout. Other of his early English views are engraved on a smaller scale in the *Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet*, and elsewhere.

Though compelled for a time to reside in Devonshire, he had established a connexion in London, and his name was known among the dealers. Palser, of the Westminster Bridge Road, who, as the reader will recollect, was one of the first to recognize the commercial value of David Cox's works, was at nearly the same time the earliest purchaser of Samuel Prout's. He used to take all his water-colour drawings, and had a ready sale for them.<sup>1</sup>

Some of Prout's early productions could be had for 3s. each. Others he sold at 5l. the dozen. Palser is said to have paid 5s. apiece for those he bought.<sup>2</sup> Prout made many drawings at the latter price for illustrating such books as *Pennant's Tour*, which was a fashionable amusement of the time. Prout and Cox became intimately acquainted when the latter came to London in 1804, and they both supplied the dealers with drawing 'copies' for the country market.<sup>3</sup>

Prout had made his *début* as an exhibitor in 1803, when he had, at the Royal Academy, a drawing entitled 'Bennet's Cottage, on the Tamar, near Plymouth.' He was then 'S. Prout, *junior*,' and hailed from '10 Water Street, Bridewell Precinct.' It is not until the next year that he gives Britton's address: '21 Wilderness Row, Goswell Street' (with a drawing of 'St. Keyne's Well, Cornwall'). In 1805 he has three views, 'Oakhampton Castle, Devonshire,' 'Farleigh Castle, Somersetshire,' and 'The Grand Porch of Malmsbury Abbey Church, Wiltshire.' Then we lose his name for a couple of years; during which he probably remained in the West Country. In 1808 he has again a London address, at 55 Poland Street, and between that year and 1810 four drawings at Somerset House, all views in Devon or Cornwall. In the latter year he appears as a Member of the Associated Artists in Water-Colours, with whom he is thenceforward a constant and fertile exhibitor, while their Society lasts. During his three seasons at their gallery in Bond Street, he had thirty works in all, adding in them to his Devonshire subjects some views in Kent, and a considerable proportion of studies of shipping. Among the latter was

<sup>1</sup> *Athenæum*, 14 Feb. 1852.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS. Mr. Alfred Fripp relates that on his first serving in 1850 on the Hanging Committee of the Society, with Prout and others, he was 'lectured' (not unkindly) 'by the veteran Member on the sin of a young man's asking high prices for his works, Prout citing his own early practice by way of example, when 'he was content with two and sixpence for his small drawings,' and delighted and surprised when Ackermann in the Strand 'raised his prices to five shillings.'

<sup>3</sup> Hall's *Biography of Cox*, p. 14.

the 'Wreck of an Indiaman, Plymouth Sound,' with the origin whereof the reader is already acquainted. It was shown in 1811. In that year, and for many years afterwards, Prout resided at 4 Brixton Place, 'Stockwell' (or 'Brixton'), 'just at the rural extremity of Cold Harbour Lane.'<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile his topographic sketches had been further utilized in a collection of prints issued by W. Clarke of New Bond Street, with the title '*Relics of Antiquity, or Remains of Ancient Structures, with other Vestiges of early times in Great Britain, accompanied by descriptive sketches.*' They came out in numbers, beginning April 1810, which form a quarto volume with the date 1811. The plates, of the nature of 'engravers' etchings,' are after various artists (Dayes, Storer, &c.), thirty being after Prout, the subjects of which are from various counties, about a third only from the West Country.<sup>2</sup> These plates are dated 1 March to 1 June, 1810.

In 1812, 1813, and 1814, he again exhibits at the Royal Academy fifteen works in all, mostly Cornish and Devon views, with two of Freshwater in the Isle of Wight. In 1814, 1815, he has twenty-eight works in the abortive series of exhibitions in Bond Street, which followed the break-up of both the Associated Artists and our own Society in 1812.

At the same time he had been engaged in giving personal instruction to pupils, in addition to the service he rendered to learners by the circulation of his model designs. Some of the latter he had been able to disseminate more widely by the employment of soft-ground etching (a process used before the invention of lithography, and productive of a very similar result) in a work entitled '*Rudiments of Landscape, in Progressive Studies, Drawn and Etched in imitation of chalk, by Samuel Prout.* London, R. Ackermann, 101 Strand, 1813.' It is in three parts, each containing twenty-four large plates, together with letterpress instructions. Part I. contains picturesque bits and studies of rustic and other architecture, in soft etching. In Part II. the shadows are put in strongly in aquatint, in imitation of sepia. Part III. contains coloured aquatints. It will be observed that this work preceded by about a year the first of Cox's books of the same kind. The letterpress is confined to useful practical

<sup>1</sup> Ruskin's *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, 1879.

<sup>2</sup> The description of one ('Entrance of the Hospital of St. Mary-wike, Cornwall') refers to a publication as *Prout's Tour*.

hints, and does not attempt to deal with landscape art in its higher departments of composition and treatment of a subject, except perhaps in some remarks pointing out the effect on the mind of introducing part only of an object to give a greater impression of its size. He names the following mixtures for the greys of shadows: Indian red or Madder brown with Indigo; and Vandyke brown or Gamboge with Lake or Prussian blue. He advocates the use of a large brush and good point, and the practice of copying aquatints to give clearness and decision of handling. He tells the sketcher to acquire the habit of standing while he draws from nature, and to make careful studies of foregrounds for future reference. And he recommends the employment of scientific aids, such as the camera obscura, Dr. Wollaston's camera lucida, and C. Varley's graphic telescope.

In the same year 1813, a set of eleven coloured plates, 'drawn and etched by Samuel Prout,' were published by 'T. Palser, Surrey Side, Westminster Bridge,' with the title *Prout's Village Scenery*. Except two ('Eastry, Kent,' and 'Carisbrook, Isle of Wight') the subjects are from Cornwall and Devon, all cottages, some with a church tower behind. The plates measure  $7\frac{3}{4} \times 12$  inches, are etched in the soft ground, and not improved by colour. Of the same period, size, imprint, and manner of engraving, there are also detached prints of marine subjects: two, for example, lettered 'Sandgate Beach' and 'Under Convoy,' dated 1 Jan. 1814.

In 1815 Prout's name first appeared in the catalogue of the Oil and Water Colour Society as an Exhibitor, and from that year until 1819, in which on the 29th of June he was elected a Member, he had seven or eight works annually on view in the gallery. If the subjects of his exhibited drawings are to be taken as evidence of travel, those in 1815 would imply that he had been in the North before that time, for they include views at Durham, Jedburgh, and Kelso; and in 1818 he has one of Melrose Abbey.

There is another collection of twenty-four views, also in soft-ground plates measuring about  $6\frac{3}{8}$  by  $8\frac{7}{8}$  inches, published at various dates between February and August 1816, by Ackermann. Three-eighths of these are, more or less, boat studies on the beach of our south coast, the rest being architectural or rural studies, some of them complete landscapes of a simple kind, with a few trees. Among these also there are two northern subjects: 'Craigmillar' and 'Norham.' Possibly they were a selection from the following series,



which are named in Ackermann's advertisements a few years later, viz. : '*A New Drawing-Book for the Use of Beginners*, consisting of *Fragments of Ancient Buildings &c.*' (four numbers of six plates) ; and *Studies of Boats and Coast Scenery* (four numbers of four plates). Prout's drawing and model books for students are, however, so numerous at this time that it is probably impossible to form a complete list, nor always easy to distinguish between them. Yet another set of rustic cottage subjects was published by Ackermann in oblong quarto, with the date 1821 (the plates of which are, however, all dated 'Jan. 1819'), entitled, '*A New Drawing-Book in the manner of chalk, containing Twelve Views in the West of England.*' This was followed by '*A Series of Views of Rural Cottages in the North of England, Drawn and Etched in imitation of chalk by Samuel Prout.*' They are twelve subjects from Yorkshire &c., the plates dated 1821.

While issuing all these model studies by means of soft-ground etching, Prout was, we may be sure, busy also with pupils ; and he supplemented his '*Rudiments*' with another practical work, entitled '*A Series of Easy Lessons in Landscape Drawing*, contained in forty Plates ; arranged progressively from the first principles in the chalk manner to the finished Landscape colours, by Samuel Prout. London. R. Ackermann, 101 Strand.—1820.' Plates  $5\frac{3}{8}$  by  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and dated Feb. to Nov. 1819. This work resembles, on a small scale, the '*Rudiments*' both in system and in subjects, and in some respects is better executed. The final prints are more agreeably coloured, and the foliage is freer in touch. The letterpress is confined to two introductory pages of sound advice. We may perceive in the following general hints there given as to colouring, and light and shade, what were the qualities that Prout considered most essential to, and how simple were the processes that he deemed enough for the production of a work of art : 'Some of the subjects are first tinted with *grey*, that is neutral tint, producing the general effect of a drawing, except what blue is in the sky, and the darkest touches. The whole is then washed over with a warm tint of red and yellow ; after which a little local colour only is necessary on the different parts. It is then to be finished with a few dark touches, to mark more decidedly the features of the picture. But few colours are necessary, it being the balance of warm and cold colours which produces brilliancy ; some of the cold tints being carried into the warm masses, and the

warm tints balanced with cold. . . . Light and shade should be distributed in large masses uniting light to light, and shade to shade, to prevent confusion and distraction to the eye, which is always the effect of a number of prominent objects scattered about the picture. There should be a union in chiaro-oscuro as well as in colour; nothing discordant, every part associating with each other.' The importance of this general union, which artists call 'breadth,' was more cherished by the early landscape painters of our school, than it is in these later days of competition with the photographer.

The year 1819, besides being that of his election, was in another respect a great epoch in Prout's career. Although he continued for a few years to draw his former class of subjects for the press, it marks the closing time of his art's first period (that of Devon views and Cornish cottages, coast scenes and bits of shipping), and is the dawn of that which followed his first crossing the British Channel. The next season's exhibition (the last at Spring Gardens) showed some of the results of his first visit to France. But these properly belong to a future chapter of our history, in which Prout has to shine forth as a leading star. With them there were still some recollections of the *Dutton* disaster, in two drawings of 'Wreckers under Plymouth Citadel' and 'Dismasted Indiamen on Shore.'

Other designs of Prout's may doubtless be found scattered among topographical books of the time. For example, a little plate of 'Deal' (about  $2\frac{3}{4}$  by  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches), engraved by T. Baker, and dated 1 July, 1820, is in *Excursions through Kent* (Longmans, 1822). And among the forty highly coloured aquatints in *The Northern Cambrian Mountains* (folio, 1820) is one of 'Flint Castle, drawn by S. Prout, from a sketch by Girtin,' dated 1 July, 1820, and engraved by T. H. Fielding. The above are entirely of Prout's earlier period, before he had travelled beyond the British Isles.

Another landscape painter of note, who made his first appearance in 1813, was GEORGE FENNEL ROBSON. He was born at Durham in 1788, the eldest son<sup>1</sup> of Robert and Margaret Robson, of Warrington in Lancashire. His father, a wine merchant in the above city, had come from Etterby near Carlisle, where (as appeareth continuously on Court Rolls preserved by the Lowther family) the

<sup>1</sup> The late Dr. Robson, of Warrington, a local antiquary of some note, was the artist's brother. He died 9 December, 1871, aged seventy-one. (See *Transactions of the 'Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire,'* 28th Session, 1875-76.)

Robsons had been for many generations copyholders, in the Barony of Bourgh, of an estate on the banks of the Eden, with right of fishing in that river. His mother was descended from Irish Protestants, who fled from Kilkenny to save their lives from the 'Irish massacre' of 1641.

Young Robson evinced his predilection early. To be told that, among the truant urchins, who hovered fly-like about artist visitors to grand old Durham in Girtin's day, was one whose after drawings of the fine subjects there were long so universally admired, may tend to reconcile some thin-skinned yet kindly sketcher to a similar infliction. For to watch field-painters at their work is said to have been the boy's great delight. But his first practice was to copy the cuts in Bewick's *History of Quadrupeds*, the first edition of which work was published when Robson was a child of two. His father fell in with this liking, and gave him what instruction in drawing the city afforded. But its resources were limited. He soon surpassed the only professor, Mr. Harle, and was then allowed to go to London, with five pounds in his pocket, to try his fortune. It was at about the time when Cox, five years his elder, went there too, and the Water-Colour Society was being founded.

Fascinated as he had been by the outdoor work of the Durham sketchers, he was fired with a warmer spirit of emulation when he beheld the maturer labours of the group of masters in landscape whose art was now displayed before him. He applied himself with great assiduity, and so much success, that in less than a year he established his independence, by returning the five pounds his father had given him. He began to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1807. In 1808 he published a print of Durham, which realized profit enough to enable him to pay a long visit to Scotland, where he laid in a store of undying impressions among the Grampian Hills. There he acquired a taste for wild and rugged vastness which was afterwards displayed in his favourite subjects. Mountain scenery, which has a depressing influence on some persons, had the opposite effect on him. It raised his spirits to an hilarious pitch. 'His residence in the Highlands,' says one of his biographers, 'was to him a perfect period of revelry.'<sup>1</sup> But he brought home a large number of serviceable sketches, of which he afterwards made good use.

From 1810 to 1812 he exhibited landscapes, thirty-five in all, at

<sup>1</sup> Arnold's *Magazine of the Fine Arts*, iii. 366



the Bond Street gallery, and in the last two years was a Member of the Society there. From the lists of subjects, which in the first year are nearly all Durham and Yorkshire, and in those which follow from the district of the Trossachs and Loch Katrine, it may be inferred that his first visit to Scotland was in the summer of 1810, and that he was made a Member of the Associated Painters on the strength of the drawings he brought thence. On the break-up of that body, he was another of its Members who found a new home at Spring Gardens, where the exhibition of five works of his in 1813 (three of Scotch subjects, and one of Richmond Castle in Yorkshire) was followed by his reception as a Member of our Society in the December of that year. Up to that season he had also sent works to Somerset House.

He had only two drawings in the exhibition of 1814,<sup>1</sup> being at that time engaged in preparing for the press a series of large outline views<sup>2</sup> from his sketches among the Grampians. They were published that year with the following title: *Scenery of the Grampian Mountains*, 'illustrated with forty Etchings in the Soft Ground, representing the principal hills, from such points as display their picturesque features; diversified by Lakes and Rivers;—with an explanatory page affixed to each plate;—giving an account of those objects of natural curiosity and historical interest with which the district abounds.—By George Fennel Robson, Member of the Society of Painters in Oil and Water Colours. The Engravings executed by Henry Morton from original drawings made on the spot by the Author. London, Published by the Author, No. 13 Caroline Street, Bedford Square, and may be had of Sherwood, Neely & Jones, Paternoster Row. 1814.' The work was dedicated to the Duke of Athole, and published by subscription. There was also a reprint, coloured, in 1819.

From that time he was a prolific contributor to the gallery. During the eight years from 1813 to 1820 he showed 161 works at Spring Gardens. By far the greater number are views in Scotland, generally in the Perthshire Highlands; for which, no doubt, in many cases, his published outlines furnished the skeleton. The chord which had been struck by Walter Scott, when, through the publica-

<sup>1</sup> He had also two in the 'scratch' exhibition got up that year in Bond Street, and before mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> About 9 × 15 inches.

tion of his 'Lady of the Lake,' he first laid open to the readers of poetry the charms of Loch Katrine, was responded to in the world of art through Robson's landscapes. With these he mingled fine views of his native Durham. In the years 1818 and 1819 he had a large number of scenes on the south coast of the Isle of Wight, and in 1820 his subjects show that he has been sketching in North Wales.

By that time his zeal in the Society's service had been acknowledged by his election, at the Anniversary Meeting of 30 Nov. 1819, as President for the ensuing year.

Of HENRY C. ALLPORT little has been gleaned beyond the facts which appear in the Society's records. Possibly he was the 'cousin Allport' who helped David Cox to become a painter. He lived at the small village of Aldridge, between Lichfield and Birmingham; and he may, likely enough, have been a friend, and possibly a pupil, of Glover's, who came from the former city. A similarity in his workmanship, and the fact that he was elected a Member on 8 January, 1818, to fill the vacancy caused by that artist's retirement, tend to confirm the supposition. He had three local landscapes at the Royal Academy in 1811 and 1812; and he began to exhibit with the Oil and Water Colour Society in 1813. Between that year and 1820 he had twenty-two works at Spring Gardens. They are mostly views of stock subjects, in North Wales, at the Lakes of England, and among the abbeys of Yorkshire. In 1819 he has the first of some half-dozen Italian views, nearly all of Tivoli, which may, but do not necessarily, imply foreign travel. He painted with great delicacy and high finish, an eye for atmospheric gradation, and some largeness in general effect. A drawing of 'Conway Castle' ( $16\frac{1}{2} \times 23\frac{5}{8}$  inches), dated 1816, and exhibited in 1819, which justifies this estimate, was bought for the British Museum from Dr. Percy's collection in April 1890.

WILLIAM WALKER was another of the *disjecta membra* of the Bond Street body. His name is in its original list. He sent ten works to its exhibition in 1808, and thirty-five in all to its gallery, to which he contributed every year till its final close in 1812. He had been a Member all through, and was one of the responsible directors in the last two seasons. He was born at Hackney on the 5th of July,

1780,<sup>1</sup> and was a pupil of Robert Smirke, R.A. In 1803 he went to Greece to study architectural remains. Pictures by him in oil ('views in Corfu, Castro, and the Acropolis of Athens') are said to have been much noticed about 1805.<sup>2</sup> Beyond these facts, we are again left to depend mainly upon the evidence of exhibition catalogues for the history of his life.

The drawings, or paintings, at Brook Street and Bond Street with the above name, comprised views in Greece and Italy, with some seats on the Thames. Walker began to exhibit at Spring Gardens in 1813, with two views in or near London, and sent thither on an average two or three works a year till 1820, as an 'outsider.' None of these were of foreign subjects until 1816, when, beginning with a 'Pont-du-Gard,' on the way, he carries us to the Mediterranean, and once more to Greece. Probably he had gone abroad again in 1815, to renew an old acquaintance, interrupted by the recommencement of war, after the broken peace of Amiens. He was, for many years after, connected with the Water-Colour Society as an Associate.

One lady member has to be added under the category of Landscape. Miss HARRIETT GOULDSMITH was one of three Members<sup>3</sup> who floated in and out of the Society with the oil element. She painted in that material, as well as in water-colours. She had begun to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1809, and when she joined our Society was about twenty-five years of age. In the Spring Gardens exhibitions of 1813-1820 she had between thirty and forty works, all of the landscape class, except one or two studies of game. Many are simply called in the catalogue 'Landscape' or 'Study from Nature.' Among the rest are not a few which have now a topographic interest for Londoners, as presenting the contemporary aspect of its environs—of Marylebone, St. John's Wood, and the Paddington Canal. There was a portrait of her by Holmes in the exhibition of 1819. In that year she had four views of Claremont, the seat of her then late Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte, whose death on the 5th of November, 1817, had been so universally bewailed. Of these she published a set of etchings in the same year, 1819. Pyne, in the following (rather clumsy) passage, speaks well of Miss Gouldsmith's art: 'There is, in

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. Percy's MS. Catalogue, at the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*, first edition.

<sup>3</sup> The others were Linnell and Holmes.



all the works we have seen of her pencil, an original feeling which is free from mannerism, or affectedness of style. Indeed, the same simplicity of form, light, shadow and colour pervades the scenes which she has chosen as the objects of her imitation, that are found to exist in nature, and which indeed constitute the most pleasing combinations in art.'<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 385.

## CHAPTER V

## ACKERMANN ; AND SOME OF HIS DRAFTSMEN

Rudolph Ackermann—'Repository of Arts'—Publications—Works for amateurs—Architectural prints and draftsmen—Biographies continued to—*Pugin—Willd—F. Nash—Mackenzie—Uwins.*

INSEPARABLE from the history of water-colour art as connected with engraving, in the first quarter of the nineteenth century, is the name of *Rudolph Ackermann*, who for more than thirty years carried on the business of a publisher and dealer in works of art at No. 101 Strand, and was a sort of later Boydell to the class of artists with whom we are concerned. The house he occupied now forms a portion of 'Simpson's' restaurant and the 'Cigar Divan.' In Ackermann's time it rejoiced in the designation of the 'Repository of Arts.' He was a German by birth or descent, and spoke with a foreign accent. During the last years of the century he had practised as a coach-designer, one of his achievements in that line having been a state carriage for the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1790. For about five years previously to his occupation of the house above mentioned, he had been established at No. 96, to which site the firm returned in the year 1827. In 1796 he bought the lease of No. 101, and opened a drawing academy in a large room there, employing three masters, one for the figure, one for landscape, and the third for architecture. The room thus occupied (65 x 30 feet in area, by 24 high) had been used for various purposes, but was originally employed for one similar to his own. It stood 'on the site of a part of the courtyard in front of which was Beaufort House,' which, after it ceased to be the residence of the Beaufort family, had been converted into the Fountain Tavern.<sup>1</sup> Here it was that William Shipley had set up his celebrated school, where Cosway and Wheatley and William Pars had been pupils, and

<sup>1</sup> Traces of these names and sites are being fast obliterated. 'Fountain Court' is now 'Savoy Buildings;' and while the above lines were being written, a house that had stood there for nearly three centuries swooned and fell, at the touch of the builders of Terry's Theatre, which now occupies its place. (See *Standard*, 28 March, 1887.)

where Henry Pars, succeeding Shipley, had vainly endeavoured to induce the skittish Pyne to draw in chalks.<sup>1</sup> In another part of the building a fencing school was carried on at the same time under Mr. Welch, an eminent professor of that art; and later on, the walls had rung to the oratory of John Thelwall, 'political agitator, anatomist, lecturer on elocution, and curer of stammering,'<sup>2</sup> who was tried for treason with Horne Tooke, and whose removal by Government made room for Ackermann at 101 Strand. The new school which he set up was carried on for about ten years, when it gave place to a more varied business, which had been in course of development under the same roof. In or about 1800 he established a repository there for the manufacture and sale of light and fanciful works of minor art, which gave profitable employment to a large number of such persons as could bring a moderate amount of taste to the market. It was said that during the great influx of French *émigrés*, Ackermann 'had seldom less than fifty nobles, priests, and ladies of distinction, at work upon screens, card racks, flower stands, and other ornamental fancy works of a similar nature.'<sup>3</sup>

On giving up the school, he continued in another way to aid the work of education in art, by setting up the practice of lending drawings to copy, on the plan of a circulating library. He had also embarked in a course of publication of prints designed expressly as models for students. There is at the British Museum a little book of twenty-four small octavo pages, published at 101 Strand, apparently in 1801,<sup>4</sup> entitled, *A Treatise on Ackermann's Superfine Water-Colours*, 'with directions to prepare and use them, including succinct hints on drawing and painting,' wherein aspirants of the brush are exhorted to study Turner and Girtin and Westall; and, avoiding the seductions of Gainsborough's *blottesque*, to profit by the 'pleasant' unrealities of Payne, and the admitted merits of Cooper<sup>5</sup> and Laporte. At the end are two pages of advertisements, setting forth a list of prints for such study, after Girtin, Payne, and others, including our old friend W. H. Pyne. These and similar series were now followed up with more systematic works on elementary art for amateurs, among which those of Samuel Prout, above described, stand pre-eminent.

<sup>1</sup> *Supra*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> Allibone's *Dictionary of Authors*.

<sup>3</sup> *Repository of Arts*, i. 54.

<sup>4</sup> The date is revealed by a notice of two of Turner's pictures exhibited that year. See pp. 6, 7.

<sup>5</sup> Richard Cooper was drawing master at Eton, and to the Princess Charlotte.



In 1809 our enterprising painter, publisher, teacher, and fancy stationer, set up likewise as a journalist; and began the monthly issue of a periodical work in octavo form, bearing in part the same title as his establishment in the Strand, namely: *The Repository of Arts, Literature, Commerce, Manufactures, and Politics*. It was begun 'as a ladies' magazine which should be to them what the "Gentleman's Magazine" had been to the other sex—contained fashions which the war rendered unattainable from Paris, and offered subjects which ladies could read without being ashamed of the red-covered pamphlet.'<sup>1</sup> This work was continued for the next twenty years, in three successive series. The monthly numbers were made up into a volume half-yearly. The first series, of fourteen such volumes, extends from 1809 to 1815; the second, also of fourteen, from 1816 to 1822; and the third, of twelve, from 1823 to 1828.<sup>2</sup> These volumes contain a valuable current record of artistic matters, and are copiously illustrated with coloured aquatints and engravings. In the first series there are 566 such plates; 168 being of fashions in dress, 93 exterior and interior views of buildings, principally in London, and 74 designs for furniture &c.; and the illustrations of subsequent volumes comprise also foreign views, gentlemen's seats, and architectural designs. Among the artists largely employed either with pencil or pen in their various departments were W. H. Pyne, J. B. Papworth, A. Pugin, T. Rowlandson, and T. Uwins, with whose names the reader is, or will be, more or less familiar.

In addition to the 'Repository' and the publications referred to, designed both to aid and to record the development of our native arts, particularly those of drawing in pencil and water-colours, there issued from the house of Ackermann a series of illustrated works, complete in themselves, of a less technical character and more general interest, some purely entertaining, and others conveying useful historical information. In these, the firm became the chief promoters of a style of illustration wherein advantage was taken of the peculiar adaptability of the aquatint process of engraving to the production of coloured prints. The development of colour-printing as now practised had to await the introduction of lithography. But in that earlier time, as the soft-ground etching preceded drawing on stone for prints

<sup>1</sup> Papworth MS.

<sup>2</sup> A new series, called *Ackermann's Repository of Fashion*, was begun on 1 Jan. 1829, at two shillings monthly; but it contains nothing but fashions, and only lasted till the following September.

in imitation of chalk, so were engravings, hand-tinted upon impressions from aquatint plates, the correlative of the modern 'chromo.' Many also of Ackermann's hand-coloured prints were engraved in the stipple or dotted manner; for example, the very pretty fashion-plates in the 'Repository.' This comparatively simple process of colouring prints must be distinguished from the more costly, but not necessarily more effective, one of printing in coloured inks, as formerly practised both with stipple and mezzotint plates.<sup>1</sup> The art or occupation of colouring prints (pursued in earlier days by Girtin and Turner at Raphael Smith's) was very busily carried on at Ackermann's establishment in the Strand. It was employed in the production of various works, among which the caricatures of Rowlandson are perhaps the most widely known.

In its application to architectural topography, this mode of illustration was conspicuously successful in a series of works, which come before us as mainly the produce of a little group of artists emanating from our Society. One of these has already been specially mentioned.<sup>2</sup> Its complete title is, '*Microcosm of London*; or, London in Miniature; the Architecture by A. Pugin, the Manners and Customs by Thomas Rowlandson.' It contains 104 well-coloured plates jointly designed by these artists, and aquatinted by Bluck, Hill, Stadler, and Sunderland. It forms three quarto volumes, including descriptive letterpress, and was originally issued in twenty-six monthly parts, each containing four plates, from 1 January, 1808, to 1 May, 1810. As the title implies, the subjects are not confined to buildings remarkable for architectural beauty or pretension, but chosen rather to represent the life as well as the topographical aspect of the metropolis. It was scarcely possible that, in the hands of Rowlandson, individual figures should be free from exaggeration; but his always artistic grouping, combined with Pugin's accurate and tasteful architectural drawing, form a very effective whole; embodying in a general view the busy world of London in the days that ushered in the Regency. The views comprise both interiors and exteriors of buildings, and places of business, amusement, and public resort, among which the following are of special interest to the historian of British Art. *Plate 1.* Life Academy, Somerset House, 1 January, 1808. *Plate 2.* Exhibition

<sup>1</sup> See a description of the old methods and analysis of the effects on the impressions, in Tuer's *Bartolozzi and his Works*, ii. 21-23.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, pp. 228, 231 n.

Room, Somerset House, 1 January, 1808. *Plate 6.* Christie's Auction Room, 1 February, 1808. *Plate 13.* British Institution, Pall Mall, 1 April, 1808. *Plate 34.* Exhibition of 'Water-Coloured' Drawings, Old Bond Street, 1 September, 1808. *Plate 71.* Society of Arts, Adelphi.

The 'Microcosm' was followed in the years immediately succeeding by several elaborate works of a more strictly architectural character, in which the plates were nearly all designed by artists who were at the same time exhibiting at Spring Gardens. Indeed, many of their drawings there were made expressly for the plates in question. The chief of these publications were the following: '*History of the Abbey Church of Westminster, its Antiquities and Monuments*,' two vols. 4to, 1812. Among the eighty-one coloured aquatint plates are thirty-two after Mackenzie, and seventeen after Pugin (besides three in which one or both contribute to the design), and five after Uwins; the remainder being by White, Huet-Villiers, Shepherd, and Thompson.—'*History of the University of Oxford, its Colleges, Halls, and Public Buildings*,' two vols. 4to, 1814. Among the plates there are, in aquatint coloured, after Pugin 30, Mackenzie 19, Westall 8, Nash 7, Turner of Oxford 1; the remainder being portraits of founders, &c. With the above are seventeen plates of costumes of Members of the University.—'*History of the University of Cambridge, its Colleges, Halls, and Public Buildings*,' two vols. 4to, 1815. Among the coloured aquatint plates there are, after Pugin 21, Westall 21, Mackenzie 20, and Pyne 1, and the 15 plates of costumes are designed by Uwins.—'*History of the Colleges of Winchester, Eton, and Westminster; with the Charterhouse and the Schools of St. Paul's, Merchant Taylors', Harrow, Rugby, and Christ's Hospital*,' 4to, 1816. In this, including four costume subjects by Uwins, there are 47 coloured plates, after Westall 15, Pugin 14, Mackenzie 13, and Gendal 1.—Of the same class was Pyne's elaborate work, already particularly mentioned, viz.: '*The History of the Royal Residences of Windsor Castle, St. James's Palace, Carlton House, Kensington Palace, Hampton Court, Buckingham House, and Frogmore*,' three vols. 4to, 1819. But, as above mentioned, this was published, not by Ackermann, but by Pyne himself. A few of the plates are dated 1816. The several artist draftsmen contribute subjects in the following proportion: Wild 59, J. Stephanoff 20, I. P. Stephanoff 4, Westall 6, R. Cattermole 6, G. Samuel 1.

The series of drawings of Westminster Abbey were treated by the publisher with extraordinary respect. He had the whole inlaid in



folio vellum and bound by Herring in a superb volume ; and, in another, the letterpress printed on vellum. Pyne tells us that the 'ponderous covers' were of crimson velvet and silver chased work designed by Papworth ; and declares that 'the binding alone was believed to have cost nearly 300*l*.'<sup>1</sup> The designer's son gives evidence as to part of the expense. 'Mr. Papworth,' he writes, 'prepared a design with Gothic details, for the brass mountings and clasps for the special two volumes, which cost 120*l*. ;' and adds, 'This copy Ackermann valued so highly that he used to provide a pair of white kid gloves for the use of the person to whom was granted the favour of inspecting it.'<sup>2</sup>

At the time of the forming of the Oil and Water Colour Society, Ackermann was making improvements at 101 Strand ; and on the 13th of February, 1813, he opened another 'great room,' 56 × 20 feet, with tea-room, staircase, &c., designed by Papworth, 'as a lounge for visitors, and a show-room for the newest works of art of all kinds.'<sup>3</sup> These were the palmy days of the Repository of Arts. In course of time it fell from its high estate, and within the last twenty-five years ceased to exist, ending, it is believed, in failure. But before then the arts of illustration and engraving, and the demand for graphic publications, had entered upon new phases, and the days of coloured aquatints had long gone by. In 1827 Rudolph Ackermann removed a few doors westward, to the site of his early place of business at No. 96 Strand, at the corner of Beaufort Buildings, where Papworth had built for him a new house, the same now occupied by Rimmell the perfumer. He died in 1834, and the final decline and fall took place under the rule of his successors.

The account must now be resumed of Members and Associates of the old Society, who had continued to exhibit their works at Spring Gardens ; and the several artists composing the group of architectural draftsmen just mentioned present themselves successively for further notice.

Although the name of AUGUSTUS PUGIN had been absent but once from the annual catalogue, viz. in 1818, he had only as yet been present as an Associate and Exhibitor, and his gallery drawings had

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 221.

<sup>2</sup> *J. B. Papworth, Life and Works*, by W. Papworth, p. 34.

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Papworth*.

amounted to no more than fifty-five in number since his first appearance in 1807. But these drawings, admirable as they no doubt were,<sup>1</sup> and indicating, as they did, the nature of his professional pursuits, did not at all represent his chief industry, or the quantity of work he was then performing. His share in the 'Microcosm' alone would have entitled him to be regarded as one of Ackermann's chief draftsmen. And that the character of his art was already otherwise known to the public appears by some introductory praise of his 'uncommon accuracy and elegant taste' as 'displayed in former productions.' There is an earlier print from his design, in the first volume (1809) of the 'Repository,' representing the interior of Ackermann's own shop, prefixed to an historical account of the establishment. It is etched, aquatinted, and coloured in the usual way, and here too the figures are by Rowlandson. And we know that Pugin was engaged on his drawings for the 'Westminster Abbey' while the 'Microcosm' was in course of publication.

A drawing of the Library at Cassiobury, exhibited in 1811, may have been made for a work on which Pugin was engaged, in conjunction with J. M. W. Turner, for the Earl of Essex.<sup>2</sup> He was also preparing, on his own account, a series of views in Islington and Pentonville, brought out a few years later.<sup>3</sup> This northern suburb had a natural interest for him, being at that time the headquarters of the royalist emigrants from France. It had also a further personal attraction; for, while engaged in making his sketches there, he beheld and was smitten by 'the belle of Islington,' Miss Catherine Welby, daughter 'of a distinguished barrister and a relative of Sir William Welby, Bart., of Denton Hall, Lincolnshire;' and 'his gentlemanly demeanour and persevering suit' having prevailed over family objections to his less exalted position in society, he married her at St. Mary's Church.<sup>4</sup>

In June 1812, Pugin, as we have seen, was raised to the rank of Member of the first Society of Painters in Water-Colours, but only

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey mentions as being 'well known as creditable pictures of the earlier exhibitions' Pugin's 'beautiful drawings of the interior of the Hall of Christ Church, Oxford' (1814), 'of Westminster Abbey' (1810-13), 'and St. Paul's' (1807), 'with many views of Lincoln' (1808-29). (*Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 7.)

<sup>2</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 10.

<sup>3</sup> *A Series of Views in Islington and Pentonville*. Descriptions by E. Brayley. Thirty-two plates, royal 4to. (London, 1819.) Didot (*Nouvelle Biographie Générale*) gives the date 1813.

<sup>4</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, pp. 5, 6.

in time to see it collapse and give place to the 'Oil-and-Water,' wherein he was only an Exhibitor, without a share in the concern. Then came the series of architectural works published by Ackermann, his share wherein has been above stated.

He had not, however, discontinued to work for, or in conjunction with, John Nash. Until 1812, Nash had been chiefly engaged in building large mansions for the aristocracy in a pseudo-Gothic style, which was anterior to the Puginesque period. Those identified with the name of Nash were 'imitations of conventual and castellated buildings, exhibiting every kind of incongruity perpetrated in extensive masses of cement or terra-cotta.'<sup>1</sup> In 1812 he was making his plans for Regent's Park and Regent Street, and in 1815 was appointed Inspector of Buildings, &c.<sup>2</sup> In these employments he largely enjoyed the patronage of the Prince Regent, which continued after his Royal Highness had mounted the throne in 1820 as King George the Fourth, and culminated in the building of the Pavilion at Brighton and Buckingham Palace. The execution of some of his Court commissions was aided by the exercise of our artist's unerring pencil.

To this connexion may doubtless be set down an interruption of the series of Oxford and Cambridge views which Pugin was sending to Spring Gardens, by a group in 1816 of three drawings of the ball and supper rooms at 'White's Fête' in Burlington House and Gardens, which appears to have been honoured by the presence of the Heir Apparent. And in 1820 a series commences of drawings of the various rooms in the Brighton Pavilion. The book, for which these drawings were made at Nash's request, and the coloured engravings in which were also superintended by Pugin, was at first a privately printed work which the King had commanded the builder to prepare for presentation as a souvenir to royal guests. Ferrey relates that while Pugin was making sketches in the building, the King passed by, and having accidentally upset the painter's colour-box, stopped and picked it up with an expression of apology. This, which in a less exalted personage might have been passed over as a natural act, is recorded by the biographer as a noteworthy example of royal condescension.<sup>3</sup>

Nash, however, did a much greater service to Pugin by his advice, and through him to the cause of art, than he ever could do by employ-

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Didot's *Nouvelle Biographie Générale*. <sup>3</sup> *Recollections of the Pugins*, pp. 8, 9.



ing him in the illustration of the architect's own works. In the course of his practice in building castellated mansions, he had felt the want of works of ancient Gothic architecture, containing illustrations of details of sufficient accuracy for a builder to work by, and he advised Pugin to attempt the supply of such a want. It was a task for which his observant eye and careful hand, guided by good architectural knowledge, pre-eminently fitted him, and he resolved to undertake it. But it was necessary to travel in search of specimens and make elaborate drawings on the spot. To aid him in collecting materials, he 'sought and readily obtained' pupils, and with them made sketching excursions in various parts of the country. Thanks in part to Nash's recommendation, Pugin's office was soon regarded as the best school for young architects to learn drawing in, together with a good knowledge of the Gothic. The work in which he and they were engaged was conducted on a different principle and with a different object from the architectural publications in course of issue by John Britton, and between the disciples of the two there was no small rivalry.<sup>1</sup> Pugin's views of old buildings were not to be picturesque antiquities or 'beauties' of the country, but *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*. Under that title a collection of sixty-one plates, etched by F. Mackenzie and A. Pugin, of 'Doors, Windows, Buttresses, Pinnacles, and with the measurements, selected from ancient buildings at Oxford, &c.,' was published in or about the year 1816.<sup>2</sup> The plates are, however, undated. This work was an immediate success as the first of its kind, and it was followed by others which established the reputation of Pugin as the pioneer and leader of the Gothic revival in this country.<sup>3</sup>

While Pugin was thus labouring in the service of architecture, he was incidentally aiding the progress of the school of water-colour painting; for several of the pupils who came to him as students of the one profession left him to practise the other with credit and success. Among them were Joseph Nash (long a Member of the Water-Colour Society), W. Lake Price (for some years an Associate), George Belton Moore, and J. T. D'Egville. And of the professional

<sup>1</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, i. 41. Pugin did, however, contribute two plates of York to the *Cathedral Antiquities*, 1819, and afterwards worked in collaboration with Britton.

<sup>2</sup> This is the date given by the late E. J. Willson, in a prefatory article to the second series of *Examples of Gothic Architecture*, published in 1836 after Pugin's death. See below as to Mr. Willson's claim to have originated the plan of the *Specimens*.

<sup>3</sup> See Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, p. 25; and M. B. Adams on *Architectural Illustrations* (1877), p. 7.

architects whom he trained, his biographer Benjamin Ferrey, and T. Talbot Bury, may be named as especially noted for their skill with the pencil. It was in May 1819 that Charles J. Mathews, son of Pugin's old friend the actor, and destined so long to tread the stage in his father's footsteps, came to him as a pupil for four years; and both Mathews and Ferrey have given a pleasant account of their 'delightful instructor, strict enough and firm enough, in business hours, to command obedience and respect, at other times all gaiety and good humour, making himself quite the companion of his pupils, and joining in all their amusements with the ardour of a boy;' how his genial presence, his quaint sayings, full of meaning, the impassioned manner of his recitals, and the way in which he would stimulate his pupils' perseverance by anecdotes of his friend Nash's early career, all delivered with his comical French accent, were a relief to a very severe discipline exercised over them by the now matronly 'belle of Islington;' and, finally, how the time was agreeably varied by constant sketching 'excursions to York, Oxford, Windsor, Winchester, Lincoln, Cambridge, Salisbury, and other places of pictorial and architectural interest, in search of examples for Pugin's publication.'<sup>1</sup>

Pugin had been living for the last ten years near Russell Square, at 39 Keppel Street from 1810 to 1816, and now at 34 Store Street. He was unanimously re-elected a full Member of our Society on the 5th of July, 1820.

CHARLES WILD, who, it will be recollected, made his first appearance two years after Pugin, namely in 1809, as a practitioner in the same branch of art, had also, like him, mainly devoted his talents to spreading a knowledge of Gothic architecture by means of prints. The following works, executed from his designs, had already been published: *Twelve perspective views of the exterior and interior parts of the Metropolitan Church of CANTERBURY*, 4to, 1807.—*Twelve perspective views of the exterior and interior parts of the Cathedral of YORK*, folio, 1809.—*An Illustration of the Architecture of the Cathedral Church of Chester*, royal 4to, 1813.—*An Illustration of the Architecture of the Cathedral Church of Lichfield*, royal 4to, 1813.—*An Illustration of the Architecture and Sculpture of the Cathedral Church of Lincoln*, fifteen or sixteen large plates, folio, 1819. This is the most important

<sup>1</sup> Dickens's *Life of Charles J. Mathews*, i. 41, 44; Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, pp. 10, 12, 26–30.

of his published works. He was also engaged upon another of the series: *An Illustration of the Architecture and Sculpture of the Cathedral Church of WORCESTER*, folio, 1823. Nearly all the fifty-two drawings which he had exhibited in our gallery were connected with these works, except in 1813 and 1816, when his name is absent, and in 1817 and 1818, when his pencil was devoted to the illustrations of Pyne's *Royal Residences*; of the drawings for which book he sent a round dozen to the Spring Gardens show. These were accompanied by a smaller number of the same series, drawn by J. Stephanoff and R. Cattermole, and must have formed one of the features of the exhibition of 1818.

He had not remained a Member of the Society; but was re-elected shortly afterwards, namely on the 12th of February, 1821.

To complete the group of able architectural draftsmen who exhibited works in the Spring Gardens gallery, the names of *Nash* and *Mackenzie* must be placed by the side of *Pugin* and *Wild*. That of Samuel Prout, skilful artist as he had shown himself to be, does not yet come under the same category.

During the changes of 1812, FREDERICK NASH had ceased to be a Member, and he had exhibited only four times since, seventeen works in all. In the first year they had been drawings for Ackermann's *Oxford*; and in the last, for a series of beautiful line engravings to illustrate a book, published in 1819-1823, in two quarto volumes, with the title, *Picturesque Views of the City of Paris and its Environs*. After 1813, Nash was absent from the gallery for three years. In 1816 he went to Switzerland and the Vale of Chamounix, and made some studies of the principal Swiss lakes, &c. For he was not merely a copier of buildings. His great delight was to draw and colour from nature; and he and De Wint, who was about two years his junior, were frequent fellow-sketchers in the earlier time of both artists. But architectural drawing was still his *forte*. A second of his important views of the interior of Westminster Abbey, 'with Monks,' is ascribed to the year 1818. It was bought by Mr. Allnutt, of Clapham, for 125*l.*, after Nash had refused 100 guineas for it from Ackermann.<sup>1</sup> This does not appear to have been exhibited. He had nothing that year at the Spring Gardens rooms.

It was during the period above referred to that most of his

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



drawings for the Society of Antiquaries were made. They are engraved as illustrations to the *Vetusta Monumenta*, and comprise eleven copper-plates of Glastonbury and ten of the Tower of London (dated 1813 and 1815) in vol. iv., and ten of Malmesbury Abbey (1816), seven of the Temple Church (1818), and fourteen of Tewkesbury Abbey (1821), together with seven lithographs of St. Mary's Abbey, York (1829), in vol. v. The copper-plates were engraved by James Basire, and of these the original drawings are in the Society's possession. The lithographs were printed, two by Hullmandel, and five by Engelmann & Co., and appear to have been drawn on the stone by Nash himself.

In 1819 he began his sketches of Paris. In these drawings he developed a fresh style, which renders them scarcely recognizable as by the same hand that produced the grand and sombre Gothic interiors in which he had first displayed his great power. These Paris views belong more to the category of modern landscape. They are light in touch, pleasant and even gay in colour, convey an impression of luminous summer air, and are treated in a manner altogether appropriate to the more lively nature of their subjects. In this sequence of styles Nash was so fortunate as to please two successive occupants of the chair of the Royal Academy. President West had praised the severer beauty of his abbey interior; and now, after these newer drawings, for which the artist had received 500 guineas, had been duly engraved, they were bought by Sir Thomas Lawrence for 250!<sup>1</sup> Nash had only seventeen drawings at the Oil and Water Colour Gallery.

FREDERICK MACKENZIE, though he afterwards rejoined the Society, and was for many years a valuable Member, did not retain the Membership conferred on him in 1813 for more than four. During that period he showed twenty-nine works at Spring Gardens. They were nearly all views of the colleges at Oxford and Cambridge, executed for the Histories of the Universities in course of publication by Ackermann, to which, as noted above, he was a large contributor. Then his name disappears from the catalogue until 1820, when he sends to the gallery, as an Exhibitor, two views of Yorkshire ruins, drawn, no doubt, for the series of *Abbeys and Castles in Yorkshire*, commenced that year in aquatint, in conjunction with William

<sup>1</sup> They were not in Sir Thomas's sale; but they seem to have been dispersed, and one ('The Waterworks at Versailles') may be seen at South Kensington.

Westall, as aforesaid. He was five or six and twenty when he joined the Society as a Member on the 4th of February, 1813.

This distinguished draftsman was the son of a linendraper named Thomas Mackenzie; and a pupil of John Adey Repton, architect, a son of Humphrey Repton, celebrated as a landscape gardener. This J. A. Repton had been assistant to John Nash, as was also his brother, John Stanley Repton, pupil of Augustus Pugin, who, as we know, worked for Nash too. The builder of Regent Street was an important man in his day.

Frederick Mackenzie had already been an exhibitor at the Royal Academy in 1804 and 1809. He had also published a set of *Etchings of Landscapes for the Use of Students* in 1812. His pencil was, however, from the first, chiefly employed in architectural and topographic drawing for the press; his earliest engagements of this kind being with Britton, the patron of Samuel Prout and of so many draftsmen of this class, when the century was in its teens. This introduction of Mackenzie's talent to the world, and the happy union thereof with that of the engravers John and Henry Le Keux, were indeed among the proudest achievements of Britton's tact and good taste. Early plates after Mackenzie may be met with in the *Beauties of England and Wales*; and he contributed twenty-five designs to the *Architectural Antiquities of Great Britain* (two in vol. i. published 1807, and twenty-three in vol. ii. published 1809). At the time when he joined the Society he must have been most assiduous in his work, for not only was he engaged upon his drawings for Ackermann's publications, but he was supplying nearly all the illustrations of Salisbury Cathedral, the first instalment of Britton's *Cathedral Antiquities*. In that series, continued through the whole of this period, fifty-eight of the plates are after Mackenzie's delineations.<sup>1</sup> In the same period he was, as we have seen, a collaborator with Pugin in the *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*. In R. Havell and son's *Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Seats*, 'Longleat' and 'King's Weston' (by C. V. Fielding) are after sketches by F. Mackenzie, and dated 1816, and 'Burghley House' (1819) is drawn by him.

The artist of whom an account has next to be rendered does not belong to the architectural group, but was another of the draftsmen

<sup>1</sup> *Salisbury* (published 1814-15) has 18, *Norwich* (1816) 9, *York* (1819) 16, *Lichfield* (1820) 13, and *Oxford* (1821) 2.

largely employed by Ackermann. THOMAS UWINS was a Member after the changes of 1812, and remained so until December 1818, when he retired under circumstances to be explained in the sequel. He was then beginning to extend the range of his subjects, but still in the first part of a career separable into two distinct periods. Until 1818, after his first visit to the Continent, his exhibits had continued to represent the staple of his artistic produce. Numbering 95 frames (from 1809 to 1818), some of which contained several small designs, they comprise illustrations from standard novels, tales, and poetic fiction; rustic pieces in plenty; one or two more ambitious historic subjects; and latterly portraits also. In such works as an interior of Westminster Abbey with prebends and choristers (1813), Commemoration time in the Theatre, Oxford (1814), and a sketch of a meeting of the Bible Society at Freemasons' Hall (1818), he had sometimes to grapple with larger assemblages of figures. The first two connect themselves with his works for Ackermann, that is to say with the *Westminster Abbey* and the *University of Oxford*,<sup>1</sup> for which latter book and the contemporary one on the *University of Cambridge* he drew the costumes as above mentioned.

Uwins paid a visit to the English Lakes in 1815; but two sketches, 'A Westmorland Wife' and a 'Cottage at Loughrigg,' were all the gain that it produced to the gallery.

In 1818 he exhibits for the first time the result of his foreign sketching, in a couple of peasant studies from the vineyards of St. Julien in Médoc. As early as 1811, when at Farnham in Surrey, he had been struck with the picturesque material to be found in the English hop gardens. 'It is,' he wrote, 'a most delightful scene, and is, from beginning to end, full of picture. . . . What the gathering the vintage on the Continent may be, I cannot say.'<sup>2</sup> The produce of that year's study had supplied him with some subjects in nearly all the subsequent exhibitions; and now that the Continent was open, he had sallied forth to satisfy his curiosity on the latter point. In or before August 1817, he went to France, in high spirits, delighted with the two days' and nights' journey to Paris, the novelty of every object, the variety of character and manners, and the 'excessive beauty of the costume, changing at every district' through which the diligence

<sup>1</sup> There is one plate after Uwins in the 'Oxford' volume of Britton's *Cathedral Antiquities*, 1821.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 35.



passed. After spending a month or more in Paris, which seemed to him 'the most picturesque place in the world,' he proceeded to Bordeaux, where he arrived late in September, and was most hospitably entertained by M. Cabareuss, of St. Julien, one of the leading vine-growers in Médoc, to whom he brought letters of introduction from a good friend of the arts, Mr. Solly, of Ormond Street. He had been disappointed with the close-cut vines of Burgundy, and the unpicturesque peasantry of that grape district. In Médoc, he said, 'I found the vineyards similar to what I had seen everywhere else; but the very first day that the vintage began, I saw its capability, and composed my picture. From that time to the end of the vintage of Médoc, I was at work, following the vendangeurs, from six in the morning till the day declined. It was a common thing to observe of me, that I worked more than the vendangeurs themselves.'

It was pleasant to find that, as an artist, he was treated everywhere with a degree of respect, contrasting brightly with his status at home. 'I know the time,' he wrote, 'when in England I have put in practice all the art of which I was capable, to conceal from my companions that I was an artist;' a kind of *ars celare artem* which was needless in France. The method of study to which he resorted appears nevertheless to have been little practised then in the land of taste. When he set himself to paint the rustics they avoided him as a wizard; and the gentry were at a loss to understand why he wanted to draw peasants so minutely. In the course of his travel, however, he made good use of his facility in likeness-taking to paint little portraits of themselves as complimentary gifts to his kind entertainers.<sup>1</sup> Before returning to England, he was taken by his friends at St. Julien, in a fine 'English carriage' and four, to the estates of Lafitte, Château-Margaux, Latour, and La Rose.<sup>2</sup> A result of Uwins's studies in the claret country may be seen in his oil painting of 'The Vintage' in the Vernon Gallery. He also projected a series of half a dozen small pictures illustrating the whole process and ceremonial of claret-making. But the two drawings or pictures in which he introduced the subjects as a novelty in the Exhibition of 1818 were in the last group of his contributions to our Society.

<sup>1</sup> One of his exhibits in 1818 is a portrait of a lady of La Rochelle.

<sup>2</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 75-83.

## CHAPTER VI

## SOME FIGURE PAINTERS

Biographies of new Exhibitors—*John Linnell* (to 1820)—*Luke Clennell*—*James Holmes* (to 1820)—*James Stephanoff* (to 1820)—*Henry Richter* (to 1820).

A NAME of note, the connexion of which with our Society is limited to the oil-and-water period, is that of JOHN LINNELL. It was not as a painter in water-colours that he acquired his great reputation. A collection of sketches by him in that medium, which were on view at Burlington House in the Royal Academy's Winter Exhibition of 1883, were a novelty to many persons familiar with his fine landscapes in oil. The former were mostly made between 1811 and 1815, in the outskirts of London to the west and north-west (then country regions, but now covered with houses) or in Windsor Forest. A few were from Wales or the Isle of Wight. These are also the respective localities from which Linnell's landscapes at Spring Gardens were chiefly taken. He was about twenty when he began to exhibit there. For the first three years he sent landscapes and rustic pieces only. After that, they are accompanied by portraits, in increasing numbers. In 1819 he has as many of one class as of the other; for he was an admirable face-painter, and in this department of art obtained his earlier success. It was not until after the close of his connexion with our Society that he began to exhibit 'subject landscapes,' and developed the style which he made peculiarly his own.

Linnell was son of a picture dealer and wood carver in Bloomsbury, and grandson of a West-end upholsterer, and was born in London in June 1792. He took to the brush young, and is said to have painted in oil at twelve. But there is a record of his pencillings some years before that. His 'earliest patron' is said to have been the great connoisseur of prints, Thomas Dodd, who, according to Mr. Mayer, 'bought from the tiny artist his small sketches of a boat, or a river scene, executed in chalk on a blue ground. Linnell was

eight or nine years old in 1800, but Dodd saw his talent, and was pleased to accompany the child on his little sketching expeditions.<sup>1</sup>

Benjamin West, having cast his fatherly eye on the young aspirant, got him into the Academy Schools in the eventful year 1805; and in 1807 he received the medal for a drawing from the life, and had his first pictures hung at Somerset House. They were landscapes, possibly in water-colour; for he had already received the best instruction in that branch of art, having been another of John Varley's pupils. Linnell lived for a year under Varley's roof<sup>2</sup> in Broad Street, Golden Square, at the same time with another articulated pupil, about two years his senior, well known in after time as William Hunt. The soundness of Varley's instruction is exemplified in the case of both pupils, by whom, writes his brother Cornelius,<sup>3</sup> 'he gained credit because they distinguished themselves without showing any likeness to their master.' The same may be said of a third artist, who profited by the same instruction, and, though somewhat older than either, joined them in friendly companionship, namely Varley's brother-in-law,<sup>4</sup> William Mulready, afterwards R.A. Young Linnell sketched with Hunt and Mulready on the banks of the Thames; was employed, with the former, by George Dawe, R.A., in or about 1807, to work upon a large transparency for an illumination to celebrate a victory over the French;<sup>5</sup> and was living with the latter in 1809 in Francis Street, Tottenham Court Road. It was probably also about the same time that Linnell, like so many young aspirants of his day, partook of the generous patronage and hospitality of Dr. Monro on Adelphi Terrace.

In 1809 he was with Hunt at Hastings, and in the same year had proved his proficiency in landscape by gaining the fifty-guinea prize at the British Institution with a picture of 'Removing Timber. The next year he showed his versatility by winning another Royal Academy prize (of fifty guineas) for a model from the life. He also worked with the graver,<sup>6</sup> and scraped some mezzotints of his own portraits. But, as above stated, it was chiefly in portrait painting

<sup>1</sup> *Memoirs of Thos. Dodd, Wm. Upcott, and Geo. Stubbs, R.A.* (privately printed, Liverpool, 1879), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Linnell's relations with Varley in connexion with Blake have already been referred to.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. MS.

<sup>4</sup> He married Miss Elizabeth Varley, but 'the pair were early separated.' (Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, ii. 229.)

<sup>5</sup> *Athenæum*, 28 Jan. 1882, p. 131.

<sup>6</sup> He engraved John Varley's picture of 'The Burial of Saul.'



that he distinguished himself in the early part of his career. In this branch of art he no doubt derived profit from his close acquaintance with Mulready. They were young men when they both painted likenesses of their instructor, John Varley. Of these Linnell's was considered the better. Unfortunately it has perished ; but a copy, said to be a very good one, was made by another pupil, Mr. R. P. Noble,<sup>1</sup> and has been preserved. The original, which was on ivory, passed into the hands of Varley's youngest daughter, Susan, who with her husband, Mr. George Goodban, went to reside at the Cape of Good Hope. There it was destroyed in a fire that caught a thatch and burnt a row of houses where they resided.

Linnell had exhibited fifty-two works in all with the Society since he joined it in 1812-13. Some are landscapes and some portraits, the latter class beginning in 1816, and there being five of each in 1819. The subjects of the former seldom claim to represent sites of individual interest. Wales, Derbyshire, Windsor, Hastings, and the Isle of Wight, are chiefly named as the localities whence their motives come. The portraits, with one exception ('M. Bryan, Esq.'), are unnamed.<sup>2</sup> Linnell was the Society's Treasurer for the year 1817.

There was, be it remembered, a third Associate elected with Cox and Barber, when the first Water-Colour Society was at its last gasp. He was an artist of considerable merit, and of some note, though he makes but a transient impression in this recital of events. LUKE CLENNELL was an able designer of rural scenes with figures, and a good draftsman in water-colours. He had been educated and had practised as an engraver on wood, and was one of Bewick's most distinguished pupils. A Northumbrian by birth and descent, he first saw the light on the 8th of April, 1781, at Ulgham, near Morpeth, where his father was a farmer. His first employment as a boy was in a grocer's shop, kept by a relation, after which for a short time he was placed with a tanner ; but a 'love of drawing and some attempts at caricature' having 'led him into scrapes,'<sup>3</sup> as well as testified his bent, he was, on the recommendation, it is said, of a nobleman,<sup>4</sup> apprenticed to Bewick in April 1797, for a term of seven years.

<sup>1</sup> Author of *A Guide to Water-Colour Painting*, published by Rowney, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> One is called 'Portrait of an Artist' (1816).

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>4</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

During that period he engraved cuts for his master in S. Hodgson's *Hive of Ancient and Modern Literature*, published 1806, and Wallis and Scholey's *History of England*; and was also employed in drawing on the wood, and a little in original designing. Among the tail-pieces to Bewick's *Water-Birds* are some entirely by the pupil, representing sea and shore scenes, and others which he copied on the block from designs by his fellow-pupil, R. Johnson, and also engraved. Some drawings that he made at this time were sold by means of a raffle to assist his parents, who were in some pecuniary straits.

Having served the term of his indentures, he came to London in the autumn of 1804, and set up on his own account. Here he married a daughter of Charles Warren, the engraver.<sup>1</sup> In 1806 the gold palette of the Society of Arts was awarded to Luke Clennell for an engraving on wood of a battle scene. The following works of this period contain woodcuts by his hand: W. M. Craig's *Scripture Illustrated*; Falconer's *Shipwreck*, 1808; and, from Thurston's designs, Beattie's *Minstrel*, 1807, and Ackermann's *Religious Emblems*, 1809. In 1809 he received the gold medal of the Society of Arts for his engraving from a design by West, P.R.A., for the diploma of the Highland Society. But his most esteemed work as a wood engraver is probably his facsimile reproduction of Stothard's charming pen-and-ink designs in the vignettes to Rogers's *Poems*, 1810. After executing these he seems to have devoted his talent to painting and designing. He was a Member of the Associated Artists in 1810, 1811, and 1812, and had works in their Bond Street gallery in these last three years of their existence. He was at the same time exhibiting at the Royal Academy. A picture of 'Foxhunters regaling,' shown there in 1812, was twice engraved.<sup>2</sup> Having migrated to the Society at Spring Gardens, he exhibited there too for three years only, in 1813, 1814, and 1815, but not as a Member. His drawings at the Society were chiefly figure groups of contemporary life in picturesque aspects, soldiers, smugglers, fishermen, country folk, and the crowd at a fair. In 1815 he had a sketch of 'Frost Fair,' held on the Thames in the winter of 1813-1814. \*

He also made drawings for the copper-plate engravers. An effective view of 'Hornsey, Middlesex,' by him is in the *Beauties of*

<sup>1</sup> Uwins made a drawing of her before her marriage, in the character of Belphebe in 'The Faëry Queen.' (*Memoir of Thomas Uwins*, i. 30.)

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*.

*England and Wales*; a series of his washed drawings for illustrations to *British Novelists*, published by Sherwood & Co., are in the Art Library at South Kensington; and about seventy of the plates in Sir Walter Scott's *Border Antiquities of England and Scotland*, 2 vols. 4to, 1814, 1817, are from 'paintings by L. Clennell.' These last are engraved by J. Grieg. Dates on the plates extend from 1812 to 1815, and one of the designs is said to have been made as early as 1803. In W. B. Cooke's *The Thames* are three plates<sup>1</sup> after Clennell; and in the same engraver's *Picturesque Views on the Southern Coast*, a number of plates, mostly vignettes, chiefly from Kent, with our artist's name as draftsman. Two works of his were engraved in the *Forget-me-not*, viz.: 'The Blind Piper,' 1829, and 'The Landstorm,' 1830. In 1814 he had a commission from the Earl of Bridgewater for a large picture (which he was not destined to complete) of a dinner of the Allied Sovereigns at Guildhall. He also gained a premium of the British Institution for a sketch of the Life Guards' charge at Waterloo. This was engraved in 1819<sup>2</sup> by Bromley for the benefit of the artist's family, over whom a heavy cloud of sorrows had then fallen. In 1817 poor Clennell lost his reason, which never returned, and in 1840 he died in a lunatic asylum; surviving his wife, whose mind is said to have also given way two years after he became insane.<sup>3</sup>

'As a water-colour artist,' writes Mr. Austin Dobson,<sup>4</sup> 'it is probable that he had not reached his highest point when his faculties failed; but he had already exhibited a distinct ability for landscape and rural scenes. Fineness and delicacy are less conspicuous in his work than breadth, spirit, and rapidity of handling.'

The highest recorded price at an auction for a water-colour drawing by Clennell is 67*l.* 4*s.*, which was given for a 'Ferry-boat' (17½ × 32 in.) in the 'C. J. Pooley' sale, 1880.<sup>5</sup>

We now come to a group of artists whose scope was more strictly limited to the figure than any of those above mentioned, and who excelled in what are usually called 'subject' pieces.

JAMES HOLMES had, as aforesaid, been one of the Associated

<sup>1</sup> One of them, dated 31 March, 1814, is a vignette representing the 'Frost Fair' above mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography*. It was published 1 March, 1821. See *Magazine of Fine Arts*, i. 148-150.

<sup>3</sup> Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1818), p. 64.

<sup>4</sup> In the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>5</sup> Redford's *Art Sales*.



Artists. He had exhibited with that body in 1808, was a Member in 1809, and continued to exhibit as one until their break-up in 1812. He had in all twenty-two pictures in their gallery, about half a dozen of which were portraits. He was, like Shelley, a fashionable miniature painter of portraits, who also exhibited subject-pieces in water-colour. But the latter were of a totally different class from Shelley's. There was nothing of the ideal about them. They had, on the contrary, a strong flavour of homely humour, as their titles show.

His mission in life seems to have been fixed at his birth, in 1777. From earliest childhood, a pencil and paper were his chief or only amusement. On his leaving school, his mother, then a widow, placed him with the engraver, Meadows, to whom Heaphy was apprenticed at about the same time. Under his tuition, the pupil made such rapid progress that in a short time the entire management of the plates was confided to his hands. R. Westall's 'Storm in Harvest' and Lawrence's portrait of the Duke of Leeds were almost entirely engraved by Holmes. The tedium of engraving did not, however, agree with his active mind, and shortly after the completion of his apprenticeship he determined to commence his career as a water-colour painter; abandoning also, though much against the advice of his friend Mr. Novello, the pursuit of music as a profession. But the sister art, in which he was already a proficient, became his chief recreation throughout a long life.

His talent soon received recognition, and his drawing of 'The Doubtful Shilling'<sup>1</sup> was especially the means of bringing him into notice. It contained an element of pathos, which is said to have drawn a tear from the appreciative eye of the Duchess of York, and was not only bought by Beau Brummell, himself a proficient amateur painter of miniatures, but led to a lasting friendship between the artist and the king of fashion. The only portrait of Brummell was painted by Holmes. Though their tastes in art were congenial, their habits of life were by no means the same. Holmes, calling one afternoon at three, when he himself had dined, found his friend at breakfast. 'Dear—dear—me,' said the Beau, when informed of the difference, 'why, this is my break of day.'

Holmes's talents, joined to a suavity of personal demeanour, won him a place in the highest society. But we cannot follow him at

<sup>1</sup> 'The Doubtful Shilling' was first exhibited at Bond Street in 1812, and is understood to have been engraved.

present beyond the walls of Wigley's Rooms, and his lowly artist quarters about Fitzroy Square; whither he migrated from Camden Town, to live at No. 9 Upper Titchfield Street (called, from and after 1817, Cirencester Place).

Holmes's subject pieces belonged to a popular, sometimes, it may even be said, to a vulgar, class. His two contributions for the first year are 'Hot Porridge' and 'The Married Man.' In 1815 he begins to send portraits, and they number nineteen out of the thirty-one works which he exhibited from 1813 to 1820. In the last of these years he has nine, and nothing else. His three pictures in 1817 represent him in his various phases. They are: first, a 'Cottage Child;' secondly, a 'Portrait of the Right Hon. Lord Byron;' <sup>1</sup> and thirdly, an illustration, under the name 'Michaelmas Dinner,' of the following verbal sketch by Lord Chesterfield of a bad carver of goose: 'He cannot hit the joint, but in his vain efforts to cut through the bone, splashes the company.'<sup>2</sup>

The taste and beauty of colouring displayed in Holmes's miniatures soon gained him a large practice; and through the influence of the Princess Esterhazy, who saw his works in 1819, he stepped into Court patronage. He painted three portraits of George IV., played and sang

<sup>1</sup> Holmes painted (at least) two portrait miniatures of Lord Byron, from which there are prints at the British Museum. Both represent him in Elizabethan costume. One, of which there is only an undated proof there, was taken at the age of twenty-one 'from an original miniature in the possession of Lt.-Col. Leicester Stanhope.' Another is in the possession of Mr. Isaac Falcke, and was lent by him to the Burlington Fine Arts Club Exhibition of 1889. It is inscribed at the back, 'Painted by James Holmes, 12th April, 1816.' Of this there are several engravings. One, in stipple by Meyer, forms the frontispiece to *The Life, Writings, Opinions and Times of the Rt. Hon. George Gordon Noel Byron, Lord Byron*, 3 vols. 8vo, published by Iley, 1825, where it is described as 'the last his lordship ever sat for;' another, engraved by H. Meyer, was published by Henry Colburn, 1828; and a third, by H. T. Ryall, was 'published September 1, 1835 (for Mr. Holmes) by F. G. Moon,' on the same plate with a facsimile of the note to Holmes mentioned below. It is said to have been of this latter portrait that Byron wrote to a friend from Genoa on 19 May, 1823: 'A painter of the name of Holmes made, I think, the very best one of me in 1815 or 1816, and from this there were some good engravings taken;' adding in an inclosure, being the note above referred to, 'I prefer that likeness to any which has been done from me by any artist whatever.' In a list of portraits of Byron given by Mr. Richard Edgecumbe in *Notes and Queries*, 6th Series, vi. 422, is mentioned a miniature by Holmes, 1815, painted for Scrope B. Davies, Esq., belonging to Mr. Alfred Morrison, and considered by the poet's friends an excellent likeness; as well as a 'replica' belonging to Miss Leigh. Mr. Falcke's miniature was purchased from the painter's son, and had been long in the possession of the Hon. Mrs. Leigh. None of the above-mentioned prints bear an earlier date than Byron's etter.

<sup>2</sup> The last-named picture was one of the most elaborate and studied of his works. It was bought by King George the Fourth (then Prince Regent), and passed into the royal collection. It was shown again in a loan exhibition in 1823, being lent by the King.

at his Majesty's parties, and was dubbed by the Marquis of Conyngham 'the King's hobby.' He also painted a portrait of the Duke of Clarence as Lord High Admiral, a miniature of the Princess Sophia, and other likenesses of the nobility.

Holmes's works are admired for their finish and depth of colour. But he makes only an ephemeral appearance in our annals.

JAMES STEPHANOFF, another figure painter who first appeared in the gallery under the new *régime* of 1813, was one of two brothers between whom it is not always easy to make a clear distinction. For they not only laboured in precisely the same field, but both began to exhibit with the Society in the same year, 1813. Their father, Fileter N. Stephanoff, is said to have been the eldest son of a Russian nobleman, and to have been sent to this country in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, with others of his own rank, to be educated. He alone remained in England, where, having acquired a love for the fine arts, he settled in London to practise art as a profession. He attained some repute here, painted portraits and stage scenery,<sup>1</sup> decorated ceilings, and made landscape drawings in the stained manner. Redgrave adds that he put an end to his life before 1790. Their mother (Gertrude Stephanoff) and a sister (M. G. Stephanoff) were painters of flowers. The brother's name was Francis Philip Stephanoff. They were both born at their father's house in Brompton Row; James, the elder, in or about 1788. Besides being clever artists, the brothers Stephanoff were considered 'two of the best dilettanti violins of the day';<sup>2</sup> but it is hard to say which was in either case regarded as *first fiddle*. They were also men of learning and lovers of antiquities.

Both these Stephanoffs had exhibited at Bond Street with the Associated Artists in 1809 and 1810, and became Members of that body in 1811; James alone continuing a Member and exhibiting there in the fatal year 1812. During this period, James had fifteen works, and Francis Philip nine. The list of subjects presents a varied series, in illustration of scenes of history and fiction, both sacred and profane. The pages of Holy Writ and classic legend, the plays of Shakspeare, the poems of Dante and of Scott, and the humour of Cervantes, alike inspire their pencils. A contemporary critic speaks of their works in 1809 as powerful, but crude and inharmonious in

<sup>1</sup> At the Opera House in the Haymarket. (J. J. J. *ex relatione* J. M. Wright.)

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 127.



colour. In 1811 they are praised, without such qualification.<sup>1</sup> Both also exhibited at the Royal Academy, James from the year 1810.

The kind of illustrative work introduced by the Stephanoffs was a novelty in the water-colour exhibitions. Before their time, drawings of such subjects had been executed with a more direct purpose of reproduction in plates for the embellishment of books, and not so much with a view to pleasing as pictures, by the attraction of colour. There was, however, to grow up in their later time a fresh demand for such plates of a yet more popular class, in the supply whereof one at least of the Stephanoffs was to find much, perhaps his chief, employment. Their contributions to the gallery in Spring Gardens from 1813 to 1820 were of the same order as those in Bond Street, but partook less of the ideal; and James had thirty to Philip's eleven. The latter was absent in 1816 and 1817; the former became a Member in April 1819, and a Member he remained for the next forty years.

The Stephanoffs were among the artists engaged to illustrate Pyne's *Royal Palaces*, and most of their drawings in 1818 and 1819 were executed for reproduction in that work. They also exhibited a few portraits, and depicted scenes of their own time in one or two drawings (or pictures) such as the following by James Stephanoff: 'The Fair held on the 1st of August in Hyde Park'<sup>2</sup> (exhibited in 1815); the 'Exhibition of Italian Masters at the British Institution in 1816,' with figures by his brother (exhibited in 1817); and a representation of a trial for murder in the Supreme Court of Ceylon. But both still relied chiefly on subject pieces of a dramatic character, leaning generally to the side of comedy, from British poets and writers of play and fiction. James Stephanoff was fond, too, of painting what he called 'A Musical Conversation.' Falstaff at Gad's Hill (1813), Bowzybeus, from Gay's *Pastorals* (1814), Malvolio and the revellers (1815), the rescue in *Comus* (1816), The Vicar of Wakefield on the race-course (1820), all treated by the brother James, are examples of the class of subjects for illustration to which their talents were mainly devoted.

HENRY RICHTER was already a successful painter of subject pieces. He has been mentioned above as a leading exhibitor at, as

<sup>1</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*, i., v.

<sup>2</sup> The critic of the *Repository* describes this picture as abounding in life, but wanting in general effect. (xiii. 292.)

well as President of, the Bond Street Association. He was forty-one years old when he first exhibited at Spring Gardens in 1813, and was a working Member of our Society at eighty-five, when he died. But the membership was not continuous, his connexion with the Society being for many years of a spasmodic nature. There is not much to tell of his early life. His father was John Augustus Richter, 'Artist, Engraver, and Scagliolist,' who came over from Saxony with the Marquis of Exeter, was introduced by him to King George the Third, and executed several public works in imitation of marble, some columns at Greenwich Hospital among the rest. This German artist had four sons and one daughter, all long since dead. John, the eldest, was an ardent politician, so much so as to get committed to the Tower on a charge of high treason, along with Horne Tooke and others. Henry, our artist, was the second, born in Newport Street, Soho, on the 8th of March, 1772. The third, George, died young; and Thomas, the fourth, was a director of the Phoenix Fire Office. Neither of these was married. The daughter, Elizabeth, became the wife of the Rev. Dr. Freeman, Prebendary of Oxford, and left a son and daughter.

Henry Richter was educated at the Soho School, of which Dr. Barrow was head master. There we hear of his displaying much talent, not for learning, but for making caricatures of his school-fellows. So, at least, writes his son.<sup>1</sup> But Raimbach the engraver, in his *Memoirs* (p. 3), mentions both Henry Richter and his brother John as among his schoolfellows at the Library School of St. Martin's, under the mastership of Mr. Pownall. The choice of a profession was rendered easy by the above evidence of the lad's capability. He began very early to study from life, and received a good deal of tuition from Stothard, whose works he always much admired.

His first essay in public was with two landscapes at the Royal Academy in 1788, when he was sixteen. But though at a later period he sketched much in North Wales, landscape was not the branch of art in which he made his name. The foundations of his practice as a figure painter were laid in a study of the structure of the human frame under Cruikshank, the anatomist, for three years; and many very careful drawings of the muscles &c., in pen and ink, a medium in which he excelled, testify to his industry. He also became a student in the Royal Academy in 1790. Then he took up the graver, and acquired proficiency enough to publish, in 1795, in conjunction with his father,

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

an illustrated edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, most of the plates in which were executed by him. Nor did he discontinue his practice as an engraver in after life, for many of the prints from his larger pictures are more or less the work of his own hand. In line, etching, and mezzotint alike, he showed a considerable degree of merit.

Richter's earliest drawings are said to have been 'in a hard, flat style, in water-colours.'<sup>1</sup> He began to exhibit at the Associated Artists' gallery in 1809. In 1810 he was a Member of that body, and in 1811 and 1812 its President, and during these four years he contributed sixteen works to the Bond Street show. Some drew attention by their eccentricity as well as by skilful painting, and are described as a 'strange mixture of extravagance and genius.'<sup>2</sup> The titles do not in general indicate the higher aims of art, but rather evince a desire to take the multitude by a display of a shallow kind of humour. It may be enough to cite by way of example a picture in 1810, on the subject of a tailor's bill, the title whereof is accompanied by the following epigrammatic couplet:—

'Taylor [*sic*], 'tis thine, the vast unheard-of plan  
To *make*—and then *undo* thy creature man !'

The most popular of his works during this period seems to have been a drawing in 1811 called 'The Brute of a Husband.' This was declared by the critics to be 'the champion of the exhibition,' and also praised for its 'character, arrangement, transparency, and keeping.' 'The Gamester,' the same year, is 'rich in original humour and fertile fancy.'<sup>3</sup> In 1812, when in its last year the moribund Association tried its experiment of admitting oils into their gallery, Richter essayed a higher flight than before, and exhibited a picture painted in the foregoing year in that material, of 'Christ giving Sight to the Blind.' This was, in one way, a greater success still, for it was bought by the directors of the British Institution for 500 guineas.

Richter, however, was not an artist merely. Painting was a pursuit which occupied a part only of his thoughts. There was another side to his mind, due in all probability to his German descent. Though known by the like surname, he was not, as far as we are informed, in any way related to the more celebrated 'Jean Paul.' Our Richter was an ardent and faithful disciple of Emmanuel Kant. The abstruse study of transcendental philosophy was his chief passion, and engaged his

<sup>1</sup> MS. by his son.

<sup>2</sup> Ackermann's *Repository*.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



attention for more than fifty years. Sometimes his abstract speculations connected themselves even with the practice of his art: in the case, for example, of a picture exhibited in Bond Street in 1810, with the name 'A Logician's Effigy,' and repeated, perhaps in oil, in 1812.

After the presidential chair of the Associated Painters slipped from under him, he had probably continued his practice in oil, while pictures in that material were admitted at Spring Gardens. His best works, indeed, are considered to be those so executed. His son states<sup>1</sup> that he sketched much in oil, in black and white, upon dark paper, and was fond of making experiments. But, whatever vehicle he employed, only five works of his are named in the catalogues for the years 1813-1820. One of these was a repetition of the picture of 'Christ giving Sight to the Blind,' which had been bought as aforesaid for the British Institution. This replica, exhibited in 1816, is then described as 'An attempt to improve upon a former picture on the same subject, exhibited in 1812 at the rooms of the Associated Painters, in Old Bond Street, and purchased from thence by the Directors of the British Institution.' One or the other of these was afterwards placed over the altar of Greenwich new church, and has been twice engraved.

In 1814, when the Allies entered Paris, Richter took the opportunity of paying a visit to the French capital; but the trip furnished no subject for illustration in the next year's show. He was only a fitful exhibitor at Spring Gardens. 'Don Quixote and Mambrino's Helmet' (in 1814), and 'Falstaff acting the King' (in 1819), belong to the more imaginative class of his works. The latter and several other of his chief pictures at this period were painted for 'W. Chamberlayne, Esq., M.P.'<sup>2</sup> One of them, 'The Tight Shoe,' in 1820, which has been engraved, is said by his son to have been injured by the artist's 'loading it with gumtion and having the panel gilt.'<sup>3</sup> Beginning with one work as a Member in 1813, he had added but four more by 1820; and after the first year as an Exhibitor only. Pyne, writing in 1823 on the 'Rise and Progress of Water-Colour Painting in England,' mentions a drawing by Richter of 'Falstaff

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Chamberlayne gave sums varying from 250*l.* to 500*l.* for pictures of this class by Richter.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. MSS. It became the property of William Marshall, Esq., M.P., by whom it was lent to the Manchester Exhibition of 1857.

and Dame Quickly,' as advancing a considerable step beyond Heaphy's 'Fish Market' in 'brilliancy, luxuriance, and harmony of colouring,' and indeed to the highest point in such qualities that had been attained in this medium.<sup>1</sup>

The following is the extraordinary title given to a drawing by Richter in the catalogue of the loan collection held in the Society's rooms in Pall Mall East in 1823, to which it was lent by its then owner, Mr. J. Allnutt. It was probably the picture exhibited in 1810 at Bond Street, as above mentioned: 'The Logician's Effigy.—A Dispute on a disputable Subject: e.g. A SQUARE CIRCLE.—Thesis. A Square Circle is round. Antithesis. A Square Circle is not round. The object of the Dispute in this Picture is, 1. THE SENSIBLE WORLD INDEPENDENT OF THE SENSES. Thesis. The Sensible World is finite. Antithesis. The sensible World is infinite. It refers also to three other Notions equally disputable, viz.—2. A SIMPLE SUBSTANCE OCCUPYING SPACE. 3. A FORCED FREE WILL. 4. A NECESSARY CAUSE FOR WHICH NO CAUSE IS NECESSARY. "Nature itself has established this inconsistency in the Mind, in order to check Reason in its presumptuous career, and to compel it to undertake the task of Self-Investigation."—*Vide* "KANT'S PROLEGOMENA," &c., *Encyclopædia Londinensis, Art. Metaphysics; and* "DAY-LIGHT," &c., by *H. Richter, published by R. Ackermann, Strand.*' The encyclopædia article referred to was in part written by our artist; and his work called 'Day-light' was published in 1817, and further entitled 'A recent Discovery in the Art of Painting. With Hints on the Philosophy of the Fine Arts, and on that of the Human Mind, as first dissected by Emmanuel Kant.'<sup>2</sup> It is a queer volume of sixty-four octavo pages (fifty-two of them occupied by notes), wherein the author sets forth certain theories, more especially contending that painters have failed to observe the blueness of the light which descends vertically from the sky. The argument takes the form of a dialogue between the writer and a set of ghosts of old masters whom he meets one evening in the gallery of the British Institution. Samuel Palmer, in a letter to Mr. Jenkins dated 13 January, 1879, describes the 'Daylight' tract as 'showing how much error there had been in treating the upper shadows of objects in the

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 114.

<sup>2</sup> The substance of it was contained in two articles in Ackermann's *Repository* for 1816, entitled, 'The Nature and Use of Daylight: a Recent Discovery in the Philosophy of the Fine Arts.'

open air, through non-observance of the cool sub-light they get from the sky. It was a discovery, but like all riddles savoured of truism in the solution.' To guide his own practice, Richter seems to have pushed this theory beyond its rational limits; ignoring the optical fact that the colour of an object depends on its own selection of the luminous rays which impinge upon it. 'He seems to think,' writes a contemporary, 'that the drapery of his figures, no matter of what colour and texture, ought to reflect in a strong degree the overhanging blue of the atmosphere; so in his colours, whether deep red or white, in the vestments a bluish reflected hue predominates. There is also an alabaster transparency and copper-coloured surface to his naked limbs, that no reflected light could produce.'<sup>1</sup>

It is no wonder that a speculative idealist like this should have found a kindred spirit in the weird painter William Blake, with whom he was on intimate terms. To Richter and Holmes, Blake is said to have been indebted for a 'greater fullness and depth of colour' in his drawings than he, 'bred in the old school of slight tints, had hardly thought could have been developed in water-colour art.'<sup>2</sup> Richter must have made the acquaintance of Blake at some time after 1813, for it was in that year that Linnell, through whom they became known to each other, had himself been introduced to the artist-poet.

<sup>1</sup> MS. by J. W. Papworth.

<sup>2</sup> Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, i. 247.



## CHAPTER VII

## WILLIAM HUNT; AND OTHER EXHIBITORS

Biography of *W. Hunt* (to 1820)—Short notices of other exhibitors—Figure and portrait—Sculpture—Animals—Topography and landscape—The brothers Lewis—Norwich school—Minor names.

A NAME conspicuous in the Society's annals appears for the first time in the catalogue of 1814, the year before that of Samuel Prout. It belongs to 'one of the most remarkable painters' that have 'arisen in the English school of water-colour art.'<sup>1</sup> His fame had yet to come. WILLIAM HENRY HUNT (commonly called 'William Hunt') was the son of John and Judith Hunt. He, whose best known works are redolent of the pure country, was a Londoner, born at 8 Old Belton Street (now Endell Street), Long Acre, on the 28th of March, 1790, as appears by the register of his baptism at St. Giles's-in-the-Fields. 'A weakly child, and a cripple from his birth, few could have ventured to predict the length of years he attained, or the genius that lay dormant in that frail and sickly body, a source of constant anxiety to his parents. John Hunt the father, a tinman by trade, could not look forward to his son's being able to earn his living by honest labour, as he himself had done. We can fancy,' writes Mr. Jenkins, 'the boy dragging himself about his father's workshop amidst pots and pans and the clank of hammers, seeking his amusement in some secluded nook with pencil and paper in hand, or scratching rudely on the floor the appearances of the things around him. And so in the course of time it happened that his friends discovered the boy had some taste, and much delight in those early attempts.'<sup>2</sup>

An anecdote, related to Mr. Jenkins by his brother-member the late William Evans (of Eton) about 1853 or 1854, gives a colour to this family recognition of the young artist's talent. 'Some ladies

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MS.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MS.

well known to' Evans, writes the recipient of the story, 'were out sketching in a village near Strathfieldsaye, and were suddenly overtaken by a heavy rain. They ran for shelter to the first place they could reach, which chanced to be a small shop kept by a butcher. The master civilly asked the ladies to "step into his back parlour out of the sawdust," until the rain passed over. To their surprise, they saw on the walls of the little room a number of drawings, which seemed to them extremely good, and which they took to be copies or imitations of William Hunt. Inquiries were made. The butcher said they were by his "nevy, little Billy Hunt. He was always," added the uncle, "a poor cripple, and as he was fit for nothing, they made a artist on him."'<sup>1</sup>

Fortunately, the father had good advisers; and he showed, in his conduct on this occasion, a determination to do thoroughly what he had a mind to do at all, such as his son afterwards displayed in the practice of his art. The boy was placed with John Varley, and the parent insisted on having him apprenticed for the regular term of seven years; as he could not be convinced that a knowledge of the arts was to be learned in less time than what was legally required to make a good tinman.

Emancipated from the workshop of his father, Hunt now seriously entered on the study of painting. He worked constantly from nature. Linnell was one of his fellow-pupils, and the two<sup>2</sup> used to go together 'to Kensington Gravel Pits, then open country, and sitting down before any common object, the paling of a cottage garden, a mossy wall, or an old post, try to imitate it minutely. This careful mode of practice' was not encouraged then as it is now, and such painstaking endeavours exposed them to many scoffs from the artists of their time. But it was thus that he acquired the close acquaintance that ripened into his steady friendship with nature. 'Unable from bodily infirmity to move about without difficulty, Hunt was driven to exercise his pencil on any object that came within his reach. In early life he drew buildings and the interior of rooms, and some of his best known views are taken from windows. At this period he was a good deal with a Mr. Prior, who held some appointment in

<sup>1</sup> In the Society's exhibition of 1829 there were three studies by W. Hunt from Strathfieldsaye; two of a 'blacksmith's shop,' and one of a 'cottage scene.'

<sup>2</sup> William Mulready (afterwards R.A.) is said to have been of the party, but it is believed to have been at a later period that he too was one of Varley's pupils. He married that painter's sister Elizabeth.

Calvert's Brewery, and it was from a window of his house that Hunt drew some views of old London Bridge that were among the last works he exhibited.<sup>1</sup> He also made drawings from the window of his room at Hastings, and from that of his friend Mr. Maw at Richmond. William Hunt has been already mentioned further in connexion with Linnell, as being at work with him, about the year 1807, upon an illumination transparency.<sup>2</sup> In the same year, 1807, he began to exhibit at Somerset House, his first works there being three views near Hounslow, Reading, and Leatherhead, painted in oils ; and on Mulready's advice he, in 1808, entered the schools of the Royal Academy. In that year he exhibited a picture called 'Selling Fish.' In 1809 we find him once more with Linnell, sketching at Hastings, and the two are named together by a press critic as making very rapid strides towards excellence.<sup>3</sup> In that and each of the following two years his name in the R.A. Catalogue is attached to a single 'Sketch' or 'Landscape ;' and his address therein, which had hitherto been at Varley's house in Broad Street, is, in 1811, at 8 Old Belton Street, Long Acre. After serving his apprenticeship, he had returned to live at his father's house.

As was the case with several of his most distinguished comrades in art, some of the earliest work in which his pencil was engaged was obtained at the theatre. His father, living close to the great play-houses, was, it seems, much employed by them in the way of his trade of tin-plate worker and japanner ; and hence it is likely enough that the scene-loft should have offered attractions to the young artist. Moreover, his studentship at the Academy happened also to put him in the way of some work there. For it chanced that one Mr. Dixon, who had himself been such a student, was superintendent of the decorations of Drury Lane Theatre, then being rebuilt after the fire of 1809, and going to his old school for recruits, carried off Billy Hunt and others as his assistants. Having already, as stated, tried his hand on a transparency, he now helped to depict the Temple of Apollo on a drop scene, and 'did a good deal to the Corinthian columns, tripods, &c., his handling being said to have been very effective.' The biographer who tells us so, adds that 'probably at a later date he had more to do with scene-painting.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> They were in the first 'Winter Exhibition' of Sketches, 1862-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Supra*, p. 376.

<sup>3</sup> *Repository of Arts*, i. 491.

<sup>4</sup> *Fraser's Magazine*, Oct. 1865, p. 528, in an article on 'William Henry Hunt, Water Colour Painter,' by F. G. S.



There is no reason to doubt the facts above stated; either that Hunt served an apprenticeship to Varley,<sup>1</sup> or that he was afterwards an Academy student. It must therefore have been with some reservation as to these parts of his training that he referred as he did to the defects in his own art-education, in some words of advice penned in his old age for the benefit of an aspirant in whom he took an interest. 'I think I could tell a young one,' he wrote in a letter to the student's father, 'what would be good advice, never having had any myself:—I wish I had drawn from the anatomical figure in all its views until I could draw the same from recollection. That may be done of an evening, so as not to interfere with the daylight, when you want to draw from nature in colours,' and further (but this is after condemning the conventional sort of teaching against which pre-Raphaelitism had been a protest), 'I am very glad I was never taught at all, but should have been glad if some one had made me do what I recommend.'<sup>2</sup>

One of his first commissions was for the Duke of Devonshire, to make drawings of the state rooms at Chatsworth, and he executed similar commissions at Cassiobury Park for the Earl of Essex, with whom he became a visitor for some time, and to one or more of whose nieces, the Hon. Misses Capel, he gave some lessons. Two of his drawings illustrate, in coloured aquatints, John Britton's *Account of Cassiobury*. At Cassiobury he made the acquaintance of Dr. Monro, whose house at Bushey was in the neighbourhood; and then mixed with the rising artists of his day, under the hospitable arrangements at Adelphi Terrace. 'He often stayed with the Doctor for a month at a time, and was paid by him 7s. 6d. a day for the drawings he produced.'<sup>3</sup> He drew for Dr. Monro an interior of St. Alban's Abbey Church. About Bushey, and 'in the woodlands of Cassiobury, William

<sup>1</sup> Two early portraits, in oil, of daughters of John Varley, painted by William Hunt, were sold at Christie's on 17 April, 1886, in an unnamed sale. One, a head, is that of the eldest, Emma (afterwards Mrs. Smart); the other a small full-length, seated, is of the third daughter, Susan (afterwards Mrs. George Goodban). The latter (named by a mistake 'Miss Jane Varley' in the catalogue) is signed 'W. HUNT.' Varley's last surviving son, the late Mr. C. S. Varley, well remembered seeing the painter at work upon it, and how he presented the sitter with the dress when he had finished it. Of the former, of which Hunt is believed to have painted a duplicate, the pencil sketch was in the possession of Varley's grandson, the late Mr. E. J. Varley.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS. Letters to Philip Brown, Esq.

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*. The above is Mr. Jenkins's account of the acquaintanceship. In the *Century of Painters* (ii. 505) the order of events is reversed. It is there stated that the young student became known to the Earl of Essex, while sketching near Watford for Dr. Monro.

Hunt used to be trundled on a sort of barrow with a hood over it, which was drawn by a man or a donkey, while he made sketches.'<sup>1</sup> It is said that Dr. Monro not only bought what he drew, but superintended the production, and was wont to sponge out the parts that displeased him.<sup>2</sup>

Hunt had but nine works at Spring Gardens, two in 1814, six in 1815, and one in 1819. Two (in 1815) were portraits (of a young lady and gentleman); the rest landscape subjects, the first two from Windsor, and three from Hastings, for many years his constant sketching ground. He had now an address of his own, '5 Charles Street, Soho Square.' He had yet to show of what stuff he was made, and it was not until five years later that he was admitted as one of the Society.

Besides the artists above mentioned, there were about half a dozen of the 'Exhibitors' at Spring Gardens, mostly in the last three years, who became 'Associates' or 'Members' after the oil-and-water series came to an end.<sup>3</sup> These will be dealt with under the dates when they assumed those titles.

There were also, among the many artists whose works were admitted to the gallery between 1813 and 1820, one or two painters of distinction, and not a few of good standing in the profession, who had no more permanent share in the proceedings of the Water-Colour Society. A brief mention of these may be made here.

Poor perverse *Haydon* showed his great picture of the 'Judgment of Solomon' at Spring Gardens in 1814, instead of at the Academy. But he sold it for 600 guineas, and a premium of another 100 was awarded to it by the British Institution.<sup>4</sup> He had a portrait of Wordsworth in 1818, and from time to time a few unnamed studies of heads. Of course these were works in oil.

The school of miniature was present throughout in some force. Among its frequent contributors were *Andrew Robertson*, a Scotchman, the first secretary of the 'Associated Artists,' and a leader in that branch of art; an Irish namesake, *C. J. Robertson*, also of much repute; *S. J. Stump*, who also painted landscapes, and was a member

<sup>1</sup> F. G. Stephens on Edridge, in *Portfolio*, 1880, pp. 198-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Century of Painters*, ii. 504.

<sup>3</sup> W. J. Bennett, R. H. Essex, Mrs. T. H. Fielding, F. O. Finch, Henry Gastineau, and J. D. Harding were of this number.

<sup>4</sup> *Century of Painters*, ii. 181. The subsequent history of the picture is there related.

of the 'Sketching Society;' the French refugee, *F. Huet Villiers*,<sup>1</sup> who had been a large contributor to their exhibitions, but had five works only at Spring Gardens (in 1813); and *Miss E. E. Kendrick*, who exhibited steadily for the last six years, intermingling with her portraits subjects from classic poetry, as Shelley had done before her.<sup>2</sup>

'Medallic portraits' too, as they were called, were exhibited by *Peter Roww*, 'Modeller of Gems and Cameos to H.R.H. the Prince Regent,' from 1813 to 1817. The most important piece of sculpture exhibited was probably the model for the large monument by *Chantrey* to the daughter of Mr. Johnes of Hafod, in Cardiganshire, excluded from the Royal Academy on account of its size.<sup>3</sup> It was at Spring Gardens in 1815. Among examples of plastic art, there were also the above-mentioned models of animals by John Glover and Robert Hills. But these artists no longer stood alone in the representation of animals. The great name of *Landseer* appears in the catalogue of 1816. He was then but a boy of no more than fourteen. In that and the next two years, and in 1820, he exhibited nine (oil) paintings altogether, all of them canine studies. One of these, which was a feature of the show in 1818, was the vigorous group of 'Fighting Dogs getting Wind,'<sup>4</sup> exhibited among Sir Edwin's works at the Royal Academy in 1874 (No. 422), after the artist's death. Another well-known animal painter and future Academician, *Abraham Cooper*, was also an exhibitor for the first five years of subjects dear to the British sportsman, and only ceased to send works to Spring Gardens on being elected A.R.A. in 1817.

The topographic branch, in its more strictly architectural aspect, so strongly represented in the Society by *Nash*, *Mackenzie*, *Pugin*, and *Wild* (scarcely yet by *Prout*), was further strengthened from without by *J. C. Buckler*,<sup>5</sup> *Richard Cattermole*, and Varley's early companion, *J. P. Neale*. The drawings they exhibited may be pre-

<sup>1</sup> He, too, painted other things besides portraits, and published a drawing-book of trees; and it will be remembered that some of the coloured aquatints in Ackermann's *Westminster Abbey* are from his drawings.

<sup>2</sup> In 1830 she was appointed Miniature Painter in Ordinary to the King. She published a work on miniature painting in 1850, and died on the 6th of April, 1871, aged eighty-three. (Miss Clayton's *English Female Artists*, i. 393.)

<sup>3</sup> Jones's *Recollections of Chantrey*, p. 14.

<sup>4</sup> The painter was then but sixteen. There are two caustic letters from his father, the engraver John Landseer, in Elmes's *Annals of the Fine Arts* (1818), pp. 499, 506, complaining of illiberality in not allowing subscriptions to a print of it to be taken at the table.

<sup>5</sup> John Chesel Buckler is understood to be still living, at a patriarchal age.



sumed to have been for the most part executed for engraving in publications of an elaborate kind which were then in course of issue from the press, at Ackermann's and elsewhere.

In landscape proper there was *Benjamin Barker*, a painter of merit, but of the old-fashioned school, founded on ancient masters. He was a steady contributor of English or Welsh views or compositions ; and a brother to Thomas Barker, who painted the popular figure called 'The Woodman,' and was known as 'Barker of Bath.'

Then there were two brothers, of a very artistic family, namely *F(rederick) C(hristian) Lewis* and *G(eorge) R(obert) Lewis*. One was father, and the other uncle, of John Frederick Lewis, R.A., who was at a later period a distinguished Member, and for a time President, of the Water-Colour Society, and had himself an early drawing ('Morning—Ploughing') in the Spring Gardens Gallery in 1820. F. C. Lewis, the father, was an admirable engraver, excelling greatly in aquatint. He added, in that manner, the shadows to the best of Girtin's Paris etchings, and to the first of Turner's *Liber Studiorum*, known as the 'Bridge and Goats,' besides the illustrations before mentioned to Varley's treatise. He was also an original artist of considerable merit, as may be seen in several series of Devon views<sup>1</sup> engraved by him from his own drawings, some of which, on the river Dart, were in the gallery in 1818 and 1820. Nearly all the rest of his thirty views there (from 1814) were taken from Enfield and the neighbourhood. G. Lewis, the uncle, was a more versatile artist. He was not a prolific exhibitor. An evening scene in 1814 ; sixteen small views in Herefordshire about the Malvern hills in 1816 ; and one subject picture in 1817, of the overthrow of the Amalekites on the holding up of the hands of Moses,—were all that he sent to Spring Gardens. He then undertook the illustration of Dibdin's *Bibliographical and Picturesque Tour*, in the engravings whereof his great and varied artistic power may be best seen.

The school of landscape which had established itself at Norwich under the leadership of John Crome in 1803, and begun a series of exhibitions there in 1805, contemporaneously with the Water-Colour Society in London, was represented during the later years of the Spring Gardens period by his pupils *James Stark* and *George Vincent*, as well as by Francis Stevens. Stark and Vincent, having ended,

<sup>1</sup> *Picturesque Scenery of the River Dart*, 1821 ; *Scenery of the Tamar and Tavy*, 1823 ; *Scenery of the Exe*, 1827.

their pupilage with Crome, had come to London, and were next-door neighbours at 85 and 86 Newman Street.

Among minor names are the following: *James Baynes* and *T. M. Baynes*, known as topographic artists of their day, who had seven landscapes apiece in 1820; *Edward Goodwin*, who had tried and failed in 1806 to gain admission to the Society; *William Glover*, 'junior,' a son of John Glover's, who exhibited for six successive years; and, as connected with the Varleys, *Mrs. Mulready*, who exhibited from 1813 to 1817; and *H. B. Zeigler*, from 1817 to 1820. The former was presumably John Varley's sister, and the latter was one of his many pupils.

The field in which Miss Byrne had previously held her solitary reign was, until the last year, 1820 (when she again appeared with one group of 'fruit and flowers'), abandoned by her to other votaries of Flora and Pomona. Of these, one, *J. Hewlett*, of Bath, and *Miss Walton*, of Manchester, appear to have been the largest contributors. Redgrave says of the former that 'his colour was good,' and 'his flowers' were 'well drawn, and botanically correct.' As his father was a gardener,<sup>1</sup> he may have had exceptional opportunities of study.

<sup>1</sup> Britton's *Autobiography*, i. 51.

## CHAPTER VIII

## RESTORATION OF THE WATER-COLOUR SOCIETY

Variations of success—Financial report—Condition of Society in 1820—Resolution to exclude oils—Changes of membership—Last days of Spring Gardens rooms—New quarters—Final biographies of retiring Members and Associates—*Glover—C. Varley—Munn—Atkinson—Uwins—Dorrell—Linnell—Miss Gouldsmith—Death of Pocock—*List of exhibitors from 1805 to 1820—Statistics of exhibitions of Oil and Water Colour Society.

COMPOSED of the complex elements above mentioned and described, the exhibitions had continued till 1820 with varying results. But their extended scope had not rendered them more successful in attracting public support than were those which had been confined to water-colours. On two occasions only did the number of visitors exceed the lowest recorded for any one of the preceding years by the old Society. Compared with the prosperity of former seasons, there was never more than a trifling surplus to divide, and sometimes the result was a deficit. In 1816 the admissions on payment scarcely exceeded 7,000; not a third of the number during the first water-colour exhibition in the same rooms in 1809; and, on taking the accounts, the committee were startled to find the Society nearly 74*l.* out of pocket. Never had the exchequer been at so low an ebb. In 1817 there was a temporary revival. A small surplus of 118*l.* remained in hand after payment of expenses; and the committee made this the occasion of drawing up a report, in which, after congratulating the Society upon its improved prospects, they tendered their counsel in the following somewhat quaint fashion:—

‘The Society has now grown old, and it should grow wise. The experiment of dividing annually the receipts has been tried for thirteen years, and what has been the consequence? The Society during that time has had a feeble and tottering existence. It has been shaken by every breath of wind, and has trembled at different times before the frown of every individual of its body. To prevent the recurrence of these humiliating circumstances, to provide for contingent expenses, and above all to preserve the Society from the repetition of such shocks



as shook it last year to its very foundation, is the object of the present recommendation of your Committee. But your Committee feel that it is almost useless to urge any new ground for their recommendation, as on referring to the minutes of the General Meeting in 1812, the Meeting at which the Society was established in its present form, they there find a Resolution to *fund* the surplus of the receipts forming the very basis of the association, and though your Committee do not affect to conceal that this Resolution has in one instance been unfortunately departed from, yet the idea has still been fondly cherished by the majority of the members, and is now looked to as the point on which are fixed the best hopes and interests of the Society. Recollecting the smart occasioned by the deficiency of last year, anticipating the probability of increased expenditure, and above all feeling bound by one of the earliest Resolutions of the Society, the Committee come forward with confidence to recommend the salutary measure of funding the surplus of this year's receipts, and thereby relieving the Society from the precarious and uncertain tenure on which they have hitherto held their very existence. When the body is in health and vigour, the limbs are used with ease and pleasure. Let the Society be once made strong and independent, the Members will exert themselves with more freedom and more energy, and the result may, we hope will, be cheerful countenances, united wishes, and better exhibitions.'

The Committee's proposal was adopted ; a sum of 100*l.* was funded for the use of the Society ; and instead of a Member's chance of gain being made dependent on the amount of his valuation of his own works, it was agreed that in future all Members should be entitled to equal shares of profits, as they had to take equal shares of risk and expenditure.

This does not appear to have been *Glover's* view of the matter. He was one of those who had profited the most under the old system, and it is probable that the change was at least one of the causes of his leaving the Society. His formal resignation was received on the 23rd of December, 1817. The numerical loss was supplied by the election, on the 8th of January, 1818, of *Allport*, as before mentioned.

In March 1818 the Members rewarded their self-denial with respect to the surplus in a thoroughly English fashion. They resolved to dine together once a year at the cost of the Society's fund. The Exhibition of 1818 brought a further surplus of 107*l.* 15*s.* 7½*d.* ; and this was for the time retained in hand.

In June 1819, although there was now again a small balance of debt on the exhibition account, the Society considered itself sufficiently solvent to institute three *premiums* of 30*l.* each, to be given to three Members (to be chosen each year by lot) as an incitement to produce works of greater importance 'for the benefit of the exhibition and the improvement of the Society.' Water-colour drawings, painted for these premiums, were required to be at least thirty inches long if of figures, and thirty-nine inches if landscapes; and oil pictures to be at least five feet long. Barret, Cristall, and C. Varley received the first set of premiums; but there is no notification in the catalogue of 1820 to tell us which particular works of theirs were executed under these conditions.

The result of the fluctuations above recorded was that at the time of the exhibition of 1820 the Members were fifteen in number, namely:—

Allport	Miss Gouldsmith	Smith
Barret	Holmes	Stephanoff
Cox	Linnell	Turner
Cristall	Prout	C. Varley
Fielding	Robson	J. Varley

The subjoined schedule gives the statistics of the exhibitions as published in the catalogues year by year, together with their results in attracting visitors as recorded in the minute books of the Society.

EXHIBITIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN *OIL AND WATER COLOURS* AT THE GREAT ROOM, SPRING GARDENS.

Year	Artists represented	Members exhibiting	Exhibitors not Members	Works exhibited	Admissions on Payment	Surplus or Deficit
1813	47	18	29	250	10,039	£ s. d. + 126 1 5
1814	51	16	35	308	11,746	+ 92 0 4
1815	68	17	51	359	9,389	+ 91 2 7½
1816	71	15	56	325	7,063	— 73 17 3
1817	64	13	51	305	11,018	+ 118 10 1
1818	66	14	52	369	10,007	+ 107 15 7½
1819	74	14	60	350	8,527	— 13 6 0
1820	96	15	81	382	8,598	— 32 10 0

The following table shows the successive tenures of office during the same period.

Date of Election	President	Secretary	Treasurer
17 Dec. 1812 <i>for 1813</i>	Nicholson	Smith	Barret
Dec. 1813 „ <i>1814</i>	Smith	Uwins	Fielding
17 Dec. 1814 „ <i>1815</i>	Glover	Fielding	C. Varley
16 Dec. 1815 „ <i>1816</i>	Cristall	Smith	Barret
17 Dec. 1816 „ <i>1817</i>	Smith	Uwins	Linnell
17 Dec. 1817 „ <i>1818</i>	Smith	Uwins	Fielding
3 Dec. 1818 Re-election } „ <i>1819</i>	Cristall	Uwins	Fielding
17 Dec. 1818			
30 Jan. 1819 „		Smith	
30 Nov. 1819 „ <i>1820</i>	Robson	Fielding	Cristall

The date of the last of the annual elections adds another illustration of the desire to efface the memorials of the break in 1812. Shortly before, namely on the 23rd of November, 1819, the following resolution had been passed : ‘ That henceforth the Anniversary Meetings of the Society shall be held on the 30th day of November (*that being the day of the first foundation of the Society*) instead of the 17th of December as lately.’ A ‘ longing lingering look ’ was clearly cast behind upon the early and simpler life of the first Water-Colour Society.

The signs of repentance soon after took practical shape in measures of reform. When the exhibition of 1820 (the sixteenth as it was called, though but the eighth of the ‘ Oil and Water Colour ’) came to a close, with an increasing deficit in the exchequer (the admissions being much below the average, notwithstanding a large addition to the number of exhibitors), the Society at length became convinced that the experiment of ‘ pouring oil upon the troubled waters ’ had been tried long enough, not having produced the desired effect. On the 5th of June, 1820, at a well-attended meeting of the Society held in the exhibition-room, it was resolved, after a full discussion : ‘ That the Society shall henceforth be a Society of Painters in Water-Colours only, and that no Oil Paintings shall be exhibited with their Works.’ The resolution was confirmed on the 14th, and the name formally changed to that assumed by the original body : ‘ THE SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS.’

The reform was not carried without dissent. Two Members *Linnell* and *Cornelius Varley*, at once announced their intention of retiring. The name of the only lady Member, *Miss Gouldsmith*, was



also withdrawn from the list, although permission (not acted on) was given to her to send her water-colour drawings to the next exhibition. But there was a credit side to the account. *Richter*, *Pugin*, and *Miss Byrne* became Members again, on the 22nd of June, and the 5th and 12th of July respectively, in the same year 1820. On the 5th of June *Scott* was again made an Associate, together with three new men, *William James Bennett*; *James Duffield Harding*, who had contributed works for the last two or three years; and *William Walker*, who has been mentioned as a constant exhibitor since 1813. There were thus by the end of the year fifteen Members and four Associates prepared to combine their forces in once more establishing a series of exhibitions upon the original lines.

Among the causes which had tended to bring about the crisis of 1820, must be reckoned the approaching determination of the lease at Spring Gardens. The Society had never been satisfied with the conditions of their periodic tenure there, and it had long been apparent that they were under a disadvantage in having no place which could be called their permanent home. Their interests were believed to have suffered in the previous migrations from Brook Street to Pall Mall, from Pall Mall to Bond Street, and thence again to their present quarters. Exhibitions had now indeed been held in one place for twelve successive years; but the room had been their own for a short season only in each, and they had to take their turn there with the proprietors of a variety of entertainments of all kinds, often affording more popular, though much less intellectual attractions, than those which they themselves were able to offer. 'Here, at Wigley's Rooms,' says the late industrious Mr. Timbs, 'were shown Serre's Panorama of Boulogne; foreign cities and sea-pieces; also Millardet's automatic figures, including a harpsichord player, a rope-dancer and a singing bird. Here also was exhibited Marshall's Peristrepthic Panorama of the Battle of Waterloo, which the spectators viewed turning round.'<sup>1</sup> It was not always easy to secure the use of the gallery even for the term in each year to which the Society were legally entitled. They found themselves practically obliged to grant exchanges of weeks and other accommodation to the proprietor, which inflicted not only inconvenience and trouble but serious loss of time upon the Members. It is graphically recorded on the Minutes, that on Lady Day, 1816, the Committee met at the exhibition rooms to take possession; but

<sup>1</sup> *Curiosities of London* (1855), p. 679.

'instead of finding the place cleared for their entrance, the orchestra was standing, with the glasses, the lamps, and partitions of the ball-room. Scattered about the room were broken combs and locks of ladies' hair; and on the harpsichord stood a quart porter-pot. To complete the picture, the learned pig, and his not less sapient masters, were parading at their ease and taking the air on the Society's premises. But the most impudent part of all was some large printed placards affixed to the sides of the room advertizing a dress ball at five and sixpence a head (supper included), which was to take place on Thursday, the 27th, though Mr. Wigley had had almost a week's notice of the Society's intention to enter on Tuesday, the 25th. The Committee in consequence took decided steps, placed a padlock on the door, and ordered their own men to work immediately.' Being exposed to this sort of disquieting competition in the use of their gallery, it is no wonder that schemes were revived such as had been entertained by the old Society for building a gallery of their own.

The Members now took more seriously in hand the task of obtaining permanent quarters. In 1818 they applied for this purpose to Mr. Nash, who was building Regent Street. They entertained proposals, too, from Mr. Burton to build rooms for the Society in Waterloo Place, and others of a like kind from Mr. Tatham. But these negotiations came to nothing; and when in 1820 the reformed Society finally resolved to quit Spring Gardens, they were obliged to hire an apartment elsewhere on very similar terms. They agreed with Mr. Bullock, known as the proprietor of *Bullock's Museum*,<sup>1</sup> for the use of the room called the Roman Gallery, in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly, during the months of April, May and June in the next three years, at a rent of 200*l*. It was accordingly announced to the public that the '17th Annual Exhibition of the Society,' to which water-colours only were to be admitted, would be opened at the above locality in April 1821.

The 'Great Room' in Spring Gardens, after its long service to art, was pulled down in the same year, 1821.<sup>2</sup> There is a small sepia drawing of the exterior by 'C. Bigot,' dated '1820,' in the Crace Collection at the British Museum.<sup>3</sup> It looks but a shabby place; and

<sup>1</sup> A print of the interior of 'Bullock's Museum' is in Ackermann's *Repository*, iii. 386 (1810); and one of the exterior of the 'London Museum (Bullock's)' in vol. xiv. p. 89, with an account of the building. The façade is that of the 'Egyptian Hall' as it now stands.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Century of Painters*, i. 474.

<sup>3</sup> Portfolio xi. No. 143.

a less ornate façade it would be impossible to imagine. High up on the dreary expanse of wall a board displays the simple legend, 'Wigley's Rooms.' On its site is now a more pretentious building, which serves as an annexe to the offices of the London County Council that face the Park, beyond.

The affairs of the Oil and Water Colour Society were finally wound up at a meeting held at Linnell's house (6 Cirencester Place, Fitzroy Square) on the 12th of July, 1820; when Linnell himself was allowed, on retiring, to realize his fourteenth share of the surplus fund,<sup>1</sup> on the ground that the Society had 'altered their plans so as to prevent him continuing with them whilst following Oil Painting, his present branch of the Art.' Some new rules having already been formulated, the second partnership that bore the name of 'The Society of Painters in Water-Colours' assumed its working shape on the old anniversary, the 30th of November, 1820, when the list of officers was settled for the ensuing year.

Before entering upon that period of our history which follows this final reform, it is due to the memory of those artists whose connexion with it ended with the parts they played at Spring Gardens, not only to complete, in a farewell notice, the account of each to the time of his departure, but to add here a short summary of his subsequent career.

There were, as we have seen, two of the foundation Members, *Glover* and *Cornelius Varley*, who had taken the opportunity of one or another change in the constitution to secede from the Society. But they did so under different circumstances.

JOHN GLOVER, when he threw up his Membership in December 1817, on the abandonment of the old system of dividing profits according to the Members' valuation of their works, was in his highest repute as a painter, and popularity as a teacher. He was near the end of his fifty-first year, and had thirty-two more to live. He still resided in Montagu Square, having been successively at Nos. 10, 21, and (since 1812) 61. Although this remained his London address at least as late as 1824,<sup>2</sup> it is said to have been at some time previous to 1820 that he purchased a small property at Ullswater, on the Place Fell side of the lake, near its head at Patterdale. The house in

<sup>1</sup> There were fourteen Members, exclusive of the lady Member, Miss Gouldsmith.

<sup>2</sup> See an advertisement of his exhibition in *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 272.



which he resided once belonged to the poet Wordsworth. Glover seems to have intended at this time to settle here on his favourite ground, and pass the rest of his life in that part of the country. But his professional ardour was still too great to allow of this early retirement. After residing there for two years, he sold his lake dwelling for 1,100*l.* in order to buy a picture of Claude's, and betook himself to town to enter with renewed energy into a competition with that painter, as well as with the professional brethren of his own day.

In 1820 he established himself at the gallery, 16 Old Bond Street, where the old Society had once, and the Associated Artists had afterwards, been located. Here he held an annual exhibition of his own works, in oil and water colour, which was still open in 1824. Except a few, the pictures were all painted by himself, and the greater part of each exhibition was the result of his indefatigable exertion during the previous year. How hard he worked at this time has been already related. The green baize, that lined the walls and also covered the floors of his two rooms, set off some of his most important canvases, representing views at home and abroad. Some of the biggest were priced at 300 guineas. There were a rosy sunset on Mont Blanc, a large Tivoli, and other works from his Italian sketches, a much admired picture of Loch Katrine, another of the Vale of Ogwen, and a series of views on the Wye and elsewhere, all carefully finished on the spot at the rate of one per week, and measuring 52 by 36 inches each. Then there were little pieces, such as studies of birds in their peculiar haunts, &c. The water-colour drawings now took quite a subordinate place, Glover having discontinued the use of that vehicle, except when compelled to employ it for the satisfaction of some of his pupils. There were also a few pictures by his son William, and two in a year by his favoured pupil, Edward Price. With the above works of his own hand, he placed on view a small selection of paintings by Wilson, Claude,<sup>1</sup> and Poussin; together with a few copies of his own, in water-colours, from the last two of these masters (one of them very large, from a Poussin now in the National Gallery). These, says the reviewer in the *Magazine of the Fine Arts*,<sup>2</sup> were placed there

<sup>1</sup> One was Wilson's 'Cicero at his Villa.' For two Claudes among them, neither exceeding thirty inches long, he had given 1,000 and 800 guineas respectively, in which investment the purchase money of the Ullswater message and hereditaments was probably absorbed.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. i. (1821), p. 43 ably Pyne

'as a criterion for the public to judge by.' One cannot but be struck by the resemblance of this proffered comparison to a more enduring act of the like kind by a greater artist than Glover, for which his was a precedent.<sup>1</sup> Both Turner and he were desirous of handing down their names to posterity as painters in oil, though it is to the water-colour school that both will always more pre-eminently belong. Glover, too, was ambitious of being considered 'the English Claude;' and on each side of a picture by that master he placed one of his own works of the same dimensions. But he did not, after all, give them quite the same chance. His pupil writes: 'I remember Mr. Glover, before the opening of the Exhibition, walking round the room with a silk handkerchief in his hand, with which he wiped off the dust from some of the pictures; but when he came to the Claude he said, laughing, "Oh, I must let you alone. You are quite good enough as you are."'

The connexion with Turner's name does not end here; for it happens, curiously enough, that Glover, before stocking his Bond Street gallery, had actually been so bold as to ask the great painter to join him in the speculation. The answer was characteristic: 'If you are so confident,' said Turner, 'try it yourself.' The fact is, that Glover was not over-popular at Somerset House. Redgrave affirms that it was to become a candidate for admission to the Royal Academy that he withdrew from the (Oil and) Water-Colour Society; and that he did not succeed. Another account of the matter is that he was invited to become an Academician, but was unwilling to be an Associate as a necessary step to attaining that honour. However that may be, the Academicians jeered at his exhibition, which they called 'Glover's annual manufactory.' But he had an excellent temper, and was not to be put down for lack of rejoinder.

He soon after became an active promoter of a new institution designed to give facilities for the exhibition of works both in oil and in water-colour, namely the *Society of British Artists*, which was founded in 1823. He was a contributor of seventeen works to their first show in 1824, exhibited with them annually till 1830, a total of more than one hundred, and was nominally a Member of that body till 1849.

But long before the latter date he was far away. Whether it was

<sup>1</sup> The reader need scarcely be reminded of the great Turner's bequest of two of his pictures to the nation, on condition that they should be always hung beside two works by Claude.

only a thirst for new scenes whereon to employ his pencil may be doubted; but there must have been some strong motive to induce him to leave the land of his birth in order to end his days at the antipodes. He first thought of settling in the newly formed colony of the Swan River, now 'Western Australia;' but eventually took up his residence in Tasmania, then called 'Van Diemen's Land.' There he arrived in March 1831, with his wife and all his family, except the eldest daughter, who was married to a Mr. Lord, an organist of one of the churches in the North of London. There is a doubtful record<sup>1</sup> of his once recrossing the seas for a last visit to England; but, with this unlikely exception, he lived the rest of his life on his farm in the distant colony. There, for many years, he continued to paint with his wonted industry, exploring the island in search of subjects with renewed vigour. He was the first to ascend on horseback the antipodean Ben Lomond (5,000 feet above the sea level). Liberal colonists gave him commissions to paint the local scenery, and sent some of the best of his pictures to England. Others he sent himself to be disposed of here; but the times were bad, and their sale was slow. Before his departure he had also been charged by the Duc d'Orleans, afterwards King Louis Philippe, to paint him some pictures of Van Diemen's Land; thus continuing the royal patronage which had been conferred upon him by the French Court in 1814. For some years before his death he 'had almost ceased from painting, and spent the most part of his time in reading, principally books of a religious kind.'<sup>2</sup> He died at Launceston in Tasmania, greatly respected and beloved, on the 9th of December, 1849, when far advanced in his eighty-third year, leaving, with his widow, both children and grandchildren alive in that distant land.

His talent was in some measure transmitted to his offspring, William, the son already mentioned as an Exhibitor, also obtained employment as a drawing master.<sup>3</sup> And the late Mr. Skinner Prout, who knew the family<sup>4</sup> in Tasmania, related how one of the sons, perhaps the same, made a wonderful drawing of the moon, in order to study which through a telescope, he broke himself a hole in the roof of his father's house.

<sup>1</sup> See *Athenæum*, 15 May, 1850.

<sup>2</sup> See *Art Journal*, July 1850, p. 216, citing the *Launceston Examiner*.

<sup>3</sup> In 1822 he was giving lessons in oil or water colour at half a guinea an hour.

<sup>4</sup> Mr. Prout made a characteristic sketch of old Glover, sleeping in his chair, with a travelling cap on his head. A cut of it is in the *Art Journal* for July 1850.



John Glover was, as we have seen, a man of much character, and some eccentricity. Among his odd fancies was one for collecting razors. He would search the old iron shops to buy them up; and one day a pupil gave him a dozen, which he spoke of to Skinner Prout as a 'splendid present.' With all his oddities he must have been a hearty and genial, as well as a very worthy, man. In the country, where he sketched or painted, 'he was the guest, the friend, and the agreeable companion, whom every one of station came to see; and he was always found in good society.'<sup>1</sup>

The highest recorded sale price for a water-colour landscape by Glover is 210*l.*, realised in the Duke of Hamilton's sale in 1882, for a 'View in Borrowdale,' ten inches by twelve.<sup>2</sup>

We have also now to bid adieu to CORNELIUS VARLEY. He was among those who retired from the Society which he had helped to found, when it reverted to the original plan of confining itself to water-colours. The number of his works exhibited had been only fifty-nine, whereof twenty-five were shown in the first three years. They include, however, various classes of subjects—landscape, marine, architecture, rustic figures, and studies, from Wales, from Ireland, and from the home counties. Latterly he had taken a classic and poetic turn, and swelled the catalogue with quotations from Gray and Scott and Horace and Thomson's *Seasons*. It will be recollected that in 1819 he was one of the first three Members to whom premiums were given to incite them to produce works of importance, and it is probable that 'The Vale of Tempe,' which he exhibited in his final year, 1820, was painted in consequence. With two exceptions he had sent nothing to the Academy since the opening of the first water-colour exhibition in 1805; but he was now beginning to show his works there again. In 1819 he had three, and for thirty years after was an occasional contributor to the walls of Somerset House. Between 1826 and 1844 he also sent works to Suffolk Street. Graves makes the sum of his exhibits at these two galleries, with four at the British Institution, amount to sixty-two in all. He published in 1809 a set of '*Etchings of Shipping*, Barges, Fishing Boats, and other vessels, met with on the British coasts, rivers, &c.,' in oblong folio. They are on a large scale (about 8½ by 10½ inches), and somewhat laboured and stiff in execution, resembling pen-and-ink drawings.

<sup>1</sup> E. Price.

<sup>2</sup> Redford's *Art Sales*.

But Cornelius Varley had other pursuits besides that of art, and these came to engross his chief attention as he grew in years. His early instruction under his uncle Samuel had bred in him a taste for science. In 1811 he invented and took out a patent for a useful instrument called the 'graphic telescope.' 'It was,' says the writer of his obituary notice in the *Illustrated London News* of 25 October, 1873, 'of great value in his hands, but even in the present day is not so well known as it deserves to be, though it obtained the prize medal of the Exhibition of 1851, forty years after its introduction.' It is mentioned in Prout's *Rudiments of Landscape* (1813), p. 16, as a useful invention for sketchers. It was employed by Horner in making his sketches from the top of St. Paul's, for the panorama of London exhibited at the Colosseum. In the year 1814, he became an active and useful member of the Society of Arts. He received from that body its Isis gold medal for improvements in the construction of microscopes, and two silver medals for machinery for grinding and polishing specula and for observations and illustrations of the circulation of the sap in water-plants. During thirty years he was engaged in these observations, results of which he published in the *Transactions* of the Microscopical Society, illustrating his papers with many drawings of living specimens magnified and traced by means of a graphic microscope of his own invention. Sometimes he employed his pencil in the service of mechanical science. There is a view of a portable rope bridge constructed by Colin Shakespear, Esq., drawn by Cornelius Varley, engraved by J. H. Kernot ( $4\frac{3}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$  in.); and there are half a dozen plates of pulleys &c. bearing his name in Kater and Lardner's *Mechanics*, 1830. At scientific soirées some thirty or forty years ago, Varley was an almost constant attendant; and there must be many *habitués* of such assemblies now living, to whom the bright little old man, with his white beard, his deep-set eye and bushy brow, and his rapid articulation, must still be a familiar figure in the memory, as he sat at a table, presiding over his group of microscopes, and drawing attention to the show specimens they contained. When he died, on the 2nd of October, 1873, at No. 19 South Grove West, Stoke Newington, and near the end of his ninety-second year, he was both the oldest Member of the Society of Arts, and the last surviving founder of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours. On the 15th of July, 1875, his remaining works, comprising 'sketches, drawings, and pictures,' were sold in 230 lots at Christie's rooms.

Cornelius Varley married and had a large family. None of his children are known to have inherited from him artistic talent ; but his love of science and his ingenuity descended to some of his offspring. John, the eldest son, now dead, was scientific in his pursuits ; Cromwell, who died two or three years ago, became eminent as an engineer, his name being distinguished in connexion with ocean telegraphy ; and Samuel Alfred, a third son, gained a gold medal for an electric dynamo machine.

Another old name had quietly slipped out of the catalogue during the Spring Gardens period, that of PAUL SANDBY MUNN. He had never risen above the rank of an Associate exhibitor. From 1806 to 1812 he sent his annual four or five drawings to the gallery—nearly all of them views in Derbyshire or at the Lakes. But he appears once only in the oil-and-water period, namely with seven works of the same class in 1815, and then is seen no more. His total number of exhibits with the Society is forty. He lived in New Bond Street (Nos. 107 and 114) during the above period, and the only further event to be recorded here concerning him is that he died at Margate on the 11th of February, 1845, aged seventy-two. He was among the artists whose studies of rural architecture were etched by his pupil, Francis Stevens, and published in fifty-four quarto plates in 1808.

JOHN AUGUSTUS ATKINSON had remained a Member until the change of 1812, after which date until 1818 he was an Exhibitor only, sending annually to the galleries during the whole of that period of ten years his spirited studies of military or rustic figures and groups, with, during the earlier portion of the time, a few subjects from Shakspeare, or Don Quixote, or from the history of ancient Greece. We count up 67 works by his hand, besides which Mr. Graves enumerates 127 at other galleries between 1803 and 1833 (60 at the Academy, 45 at the British Institution, and 24 at Suffolk Street). Among his later exhibits at the Royal Academy are scenes from English history, Shakspeare, Don Quixote, &c., and in 1816 a 'Battle of Waterloo.' Redgrave mentions some 'very spirited' battle pieces drawn by him on stone. He never rejoined the Society, the year 1818 being the date of his last appearance at Spring Gardens, where his final exhibit was a portrait of the Duke of Wellington. No information has come to hand respecting his later



life or the date or circumstances of his death. Till 1810 he is at 8 Conway Street, Fitzroy Square ; then at 43 Frith Street, Soho ; and in 1817-18 at Hammond Cottage, Shepherd's Bush. A later address was 48 London Street, Fitzroy Square.

It was on the 17th of December, 1818, that THOMAS UWINS had tendered his resignation on the ground that he was unable to contribute to the coming exhibition. It was in vain that the Society pressed him to remain, and offered to waive the rule binding Members to exhibit, rather than lose one of such acknowledged value. What had hindered him from exhibiting, and so led to his resignation, was a necessity, which had suddenly arisen, to devote himself for a time to task-work, which should ensure a readier payment than the making of gallery drawings. He had to meet the instalments (100*l.* per quarter) coming due on a forfeited guarantee which he and Warren the engraver had given jointly to the Society of Arts, and whereby he had generously resolved that his friend, who had a wife and family, should not be a loser.<sup>1</sup> For this purpose he got money by making miniature copies of portraits and pictures in water-colours, and drawing for small illustrative plates in books ; and worked so hard and closely that he injured his eyesight, and had to expend the best part of another year (1820) in recovering it.

About this time he visited Scotland to copy family pictures and make sketches to illustrate the Waverley novels ; and seeing, as he thought, an opening there as a portrait painter, he settled in Edinburgh in November 1821. Finding that his sight failed him again when he attempted miniature, he now confined himself to life-size, making chalk portraits at prices gradually rising from five to seven and ten guineas. When George IV. visited the Scotch capital in 1822, Uwins painted some transparencies in his honour, one being twelve feet high. 'Making old women young, and ugly women handsome,' was, he wrote, his 'daily occupation,' in April 1823. At the end of that year, or the beginning of the next, he returned to London ; and after his mother's death in August 1824, paid his first visit to Italy.

The unfolding to him of new scenes and subjects for his pencil made this a turning point in his career. It was as a painter of Italian life and character and sunshine, and by his work in oils, that he was

<sup>1</sup> In 1820 Uwins was elected an Honorary Member of the Society of Arts. He was also eventually reimbursed by the defaulter the loss sustained as his security.

henceforth to be chiefly known. He remained in Italy till 1831, visiting, among other places, Rome and Florence and Naples, where we find him established and highly patronized as a regular portrait painter by 1826. During his residence at Naples he gave up water-colours entirely, but kept up his connexion with the graphic press, by sending paintings to England to be reproduced in engravings for the *Annuals*, which were then rising into the height of fashion.

In 1830 there appeared, after a space of eight years' absence from any of the London exhibitions, a picture by him at the Royal Academy of 'Neapolitans dancing the Tarantella.' 'The Saint Manufactory,' at the same gallery in 1832, was his next Italian subject; and there were others to follow for many successive years. He was made A.R.A. in November 1833, and R.A. in February 1838. In 1844 he was appointed Librarian to the Academy in succession to Callcott; in 1845 was made Surveyor of Pictures to the Queen, for whose pavilion at Buckingham Palace he had painted (in 1843) a picture of the Lady in *Comus*; and in 1847 followed Sir Charles Eastlake as Keeper of the National Gallery.

Though no pre-Raphaelite, he lived to perceive the genius of Millais in 'the water-plants, and the flowers, and the dark dark stream'<sup>1</sup> of his 'Ophelia' in the Academy Exhibition in Trafalgar Square in 1852; and we find him in the following December rearranging the National pictures in the other wing of the building after Turner's death, to give that painter the place he claimed beside the works of Claude.

Late in life, namely on the 12th of September, 1850, he had the good fortune to marry. He was then sixty-eight years of age, and was becoming conscious that his art was not what it had been. His widow relates that 'when the cumbrous apparatus of easel and palette were too much for his declining strength, he resumed the practice of water-colours.'<sup>2</sup> In January 1855 a fatal illness began, which carried him off on the 26th of August, 1857. The place of his burial is at Staines.

As to his appearance, Uwins painted himself, in words, at the time of his first visit to France, when he was thirty-five, as of 'a little meagre swarthy figure,' which caused him to be taken for a Spaniard or an Italian, in a land where all the English are believed to have

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir*, i. 134.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 144, 145.

'round persons and florid complexions.' Sometimes, too, he was thought to be a Protestant minister, as he had 'somewhat of a clerical air,' and talked on matters of religion.<sup>1</sup> But though fond of companionship, he was not an habitual talker, his 'natural inclination' being 'to silence.' Hence the tone of his mind and the expression of his feelings are conveyed in a more than usual degree by his letters to relations, many whereof are printed with the memoir of his life published by his widow, to which book the writer is indebted for most of the above facts. These show him to have been a man of fervent piety, a kind heart, and deep moral sensibility; and that his feelings were constantly being worried when abroad by papal practices in the countries he visited. He was not, indeed, free from some tendency to superstitions of his own, being frightened by dreams and fascinated by the class of sciences which usually allure unscientific minds.<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Uwins describes her husband in his old age as possessing a repose of expression which gave refinement to features not naturally handsome; his eyes pale blue, overshadowed by black eyebrows 'straight and flexible,' and what remained of hair, after a loss in early manhood, now mostly turned from that colour to a 'creamy golden hue.'

Although in the second and more distinguished period of his career as an artist, Uwins was not a Member of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, a bond of union continued to exist till a late period of his life between him and some of his old friends therein, through a frequent companionship in the Sketching Society, which Uwins joined as a Member in 1824. He had before been present as a visitor on several occasions, the first of which was on the 27th of April, 1808. Some interesting memoranda of this Society, to the portfolio whereof Uwins contributed many graceful designs, are appended to the 'Memoir' above cited. An account of it has been given in a previous chapter in relation to the biography of J. J. Chalon.

The following are among the designs by Uwins engraved in the Annuals. *Forget-me-Not*: 1825, 'Dying Soldier;' 1828, 'Hop Girl.' *Amulet*: 1830, 'The Mandoline' (engraved by F. Bacon); 1835, 'Children bearing Flowers—Festa of the Madonna dei Fiori, Naples'

<sup>1</sup> Once indeed, in Switzerland, when he had a cloak lined with scarlet, 'the peasantry met him with genuflexions,' and his own companions thereupon gave him the nickname of Cardinal *Fetch*. (*Memoir*, i. 171 n.)

<sup>2</sup> See, as to dreams, *Memoir*, i. 93, 98; phrenology, 98; mesmerism, hydropathy, and homœopathy, 127; astrology, 141; and *passim* as to papal practices.



(S. Sangster). *Literary Souvenir*: 1830, 'The Brigand's Cave' (Ch. Rolls); 1833, 'Children in Prayer' (S. Sangster); 1836, 'A Peasant Girl at Gensano' (E. J. Portbury), 'Punch at Naples' (J. Goodyear). *Keepsake*: 1836, 'Villa Reale, Naples,' title vignette (T. Radclyffe); 1837, 'St. Arcangelo near La Cava,' title vignette (E. Radclyffe). Heath's *Book of Beauty*: 1836, Lady in a balcony, title vignette (H. Robinson); 1837, 'Villa Reale, Naples—Festa of Pie' di Grotta' (H. Robinson). In the *Art Union* for 1848 is 'The Dancing Lesson' (J. Outrim), and for 1849, 'Chapeau de Brigand,' in the Vernon Gallery (L. Stocks).

EDMUND DORRELL, though not continuing his Membership after the admission of oil pictures at Spring Gardens, sent a few more works (in water-colour probably), of the same class as before, to the gallery, but ceased to exhibit there after 1819, and did not rejoin the reformed Society. Works by him are named in the catalogues of the Society of British Artists till 1836, but his exhibited works to that date from 1807, when he first appeared at Somerset House, number no more than eighty-four in all, including the fifty-five in our own gallery. About half a dozen of his drawings are at South Kensington, four of which were presented to the Art Museum in 1875 by Miss Dorrell, who also lent a fine example to the Grosvenor Gallery in the winter of 1877-78.

He married a daughter of John and Elizabeth Robson. Whether she was related to the landscape painter of that name has not been discovered. Dorrell survived his wife. She died 12 August, 1833, aged fifty-eight, and is buried in St. George's Cemetery, Hyde Park Place, where an upright tombstone records these facts, and also that he himself departed this life on the 28th of February, 1857, in his eightieth year, and that his remains lie interred in the Highgate Cemetery. He is said to have lived at one time in the house at Chelsea previously rented by John Varley.

JOHN LINNELL's retirement, on the ground that he was a painter in oils, was of course final. He did, it is true, make some use of water-colours afterwards on occasion, but not as an exhibitor of original design. He was, for example, engaged between the years 1832 and 1839 in copying certain pictures in the National Gallery for the 'Society of Associated Engravers,' who were then publishing,

under John Pye's management, a series of fine reproductions of the pictures there.<sup>1</sup> These must have been in the latter material; but it is by his work in the former that he is, and will remain, known.

Although Linnell's actual connexion with our Society ceased in 1820, his social relations with some of its leading Members long maintained a link of attachment to the subject of this history. He lived till recent times, dying on the 20th of January, 1882, in his ninetieth year, after first acquiring high repute as a portrait painter, and then rising to great and more widely recognized distinction in landscape art, the subjects of his finest works being treated in a vein of pathos near akin to human sentiment.

After the close of the Spring Gardens gallery, he carried his canvases to Somerset House, where, and afterwards at Trafalgar Square and Burlington House, they were rarely absent from the Academy walls down to his very last year. The honour of Membership was offered him late in life, but declined, he having then withdrawn his name from the list of candidates, in which it had stood, without success, for twenty-one years. And, in a pamphlet, he publicly denied the Academy's claim to be regarded as a national institution.

Although his *chefs-d'œuvre* have been resold for much more than he received for them, Linnell realized a considerable fortune by his profession, and having, in 1852, built himself a house in a beautiful situation on the southern slope of Redhill, he passed his latter days there, still exercising his brush and also a genial hospitality. On his death he left a widow (who survived him four years),<sup>2</sup> and a family of artist sons established in separate residences round about his own.

Graves enumerates 267 works of Linnell's at the Royal Academy and British Institution between 1807 and 1879. To these must be added a last picture, 'The Woodcutter,' in 1881, and fifty-two exhibited at the Oil and Water Colour Society.

A cut after a photographic portrait of Linnell by Messrs. Elliott

<sup>1</sup> The following were the works engraved from Linnell's copies, for making which the artist received the sums specified in the several cases: 'Christ appearing to Peter,' *A. Carracci*, 50*l.*; 'Lord Heathfield,' *Reynolds*, 25*l.*; 'Susanna and the Elders,' *L. Carracci*, 36*l.* 15*s.*; 'The Crucifixion,' *Rembrandt*, 30*l.*; 'Silenus,' *A. Carracci*, 35*l.*; 'The Consecration of St. Nicholas,' *P. Veronese*, 50*l.* He at the same time signified to the Committee his strong desire to be allowed so to copy the larger historical pictures in the gallery, particularly the *Sebastian del Piombo* of the 'Raising of Lazarus.'

<sup>2</sup> Mary Anne, widow of J. Linnell, of Redhill, Surrey, and daughter of the late W. Budden, of the Crescent, Kensington, died at Hastings, 7 March, 1886, aged seventy. (*Daily News*, 15 March, 1886.)

& Fry was given in the *Illustrated London News* of 4 February, 1882 ; and a small half-length of him in oil was in the Leeds Exhibition of 1868, and in a sale at Christie's on the 17th of April, 1886. The highest sale prices recorded for his water-colours are : ' Boy herding Sheep ' ( $8\frac{3}{4} \times 12\frac{1}{2}$  in.), 262*l.* 10*s.* (Knowles sale, 1877) ; ' Evening,' 236*l.* 5*s.*, and ' Morning,' 231*l.* (Brooks' sale, 1871).

MISS GOULDSMITH afterwards exhibited at Suffolk Street, and again at the Royal Academy till 1854. She was an Honorary Member of the Society of British Artists from 1824 to 1843. Her taste for topography appears again in the publication in 1824 of '*Four Views of Celebrated Places*, drawn from Nature on Stone; by Harriot Gouldsmith. London. C. Hullmandel.' They were : 1. Cottage by the Serpentine ;<sup>1</sup> 2. Remains of Palace of Thomas à Becket, at Tarring, Sussex ; 3. Part of the old Jew's Harp, 'lately standing in Marylebone Park.' 4 ; The Cottage where Selden was born, at Salvington, Sussex. Pyne praises the masculine freedom of Miss Gouldsmith's lithographic drawing.<sup>2</sup> She is mentioned as having made 'an admirable copy,' apparently at about this date, of a fine Wilson. It was a picture which that eminent artist painted for Mr. Saunders Welsh (magistrate), at the instance of Nollekens the sculptor, who said that such a commission would be a better compliment to Wilson than asking him to dinner, as Welsh had proposed. At the latter's death this picture had passed into the hands of Nollekens, and on his death in 1819 into those of Mr. Tomkison, of Dean Street, Soho, its possessor when Miss Gouldsmith copied it. There were also a subject picture from *Don Quixote* by Miss Gouldsmith, and one or two portraits. She died on the 6th of January, 1863, at the age of seventy-six ; having, late in life, changed her name, on marriage with Captain Arnold, of the Royal Navy.

Scarcely had the Society once more taken shape as a body of water-colour painters *pur et simple*, and before it had had time to open another exhibition, when one more of the little group of its first

<sup>1</sup> Doubtless from a drawing by her, exhibited in 1814 as 'View of the Receiving House of the Humane Society, on the North of the Serpentine, in Hyde Park.' Pyne says that in this 'rural retreat,' which was the Deputy Ranger's Lodge before the 'oblong sheet of wateryclept serpentine' was formed, the painter Edridge frequently resided during the summer. (See *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 386.)

<sup>2</sup> See *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 385.



founders, one moreover who had been staunch to its early faith, passed away. This was old NICHOLAS POCOCK, now eighty years of age, who died at Maidenhead on the 19th of March, 1821. He had exhibited nothing for the last three seasons, and in him the last representative, in the Society, of the old school of tinters passed away.<sup>1</sup>

Here too ends the story of the second period ; during which for eight years a revived Society endeavoured with doubtful success to combine the rival attractions of pictures in oil and drawings in water-colours.

A complete list of contributors to the Society's exhibitions during the first two periods of its career is here appended for reference, specifying, in the form of a schedule, the office or other capacity in relation to the Society in which the several artists' names appear in the catalogue in each successive year.

<sup>1</sup> Pocock's drawings are of small commercial value now. The highest price for one recorded in Redford's *Art Sales* is twenty-five guineas for 'H.M.S. *Fiorenzo* and *Amelia* engaging three French Frigates,' sold in Sir G. Burrard's executors' sale, 1886.

EXHIBITORS AT THE 'SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS'  
(1805-1812) AND THE 'SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN OIL AND  
WATER COLOURS' (1813-1820).

Exhibitors whose names are printed in small capitals were at some time or times (either during these periods or afterwards) Members, and those in *italics* Associates only of the Society. P signifies President; S, Secretary; T, Treasurer; M, Member; A, Associate (between 1805 and 1812); and E, Exhibitor (between 1813 and 1820). The small letter *a* signifies that the artist on a line with whose name it is placed exhibited also with the 'Associated Artists.'<sup>1</sup>

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF																
	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	
Agasse, T. L. . . .												E				E	
Aglio, A. . . .																	
ALLPORT, H. C. . . .									E	E	E	E	E	E	M	M	
ATKINSON, J. A. . . .				A	M	M	M	M	E	E	E	E	E	E			
Badger, <i>Miss</i> . . . .											E						
Baker, <i>Miss</i> . . . .																E	
<i>Barber, C.</i> . . . .						<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	E		E	E	E				
Barber, <i>Miss</i> E. . . .												E					
Barber, J. V. . . .									E								
Barker, B. . . .								<i>a</i>	E	E	E	E		E	E	E	
Barney, J. (senior) . . .														E	E		
Barney, J. (junior) . . .											E	E	E	E	E		
BARRET, G. . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	T	E	M	M	T	M	M	M	
Barry, J. . . .																	
Baynes, J. . . .					<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>								E	
Baynes, T. M. . . .																E	
Belisario, J. . . .											E	E	E	E			
Bennett, T. . . .												E	E	E	E		
<i>Bennett, W. T.</i> . . . .				<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>							E	E	
Betham, <i>Miss</i> . . . .							<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>		E	E						
Bewick, W. . . .																E	
Blake, B. . . .																E	
Boaden, J. . . .															E	E	
Bradley, J. . . .															E	E	
Buckler, J. C. . . .											E	E	E	E	E	E	
Burgess, J. . . .												E		E	E	E	
BYRNE, <i>Miss</i> . . . .		A	A	A	M	M	M	M					E			E	
Carpenter, <i>Mrs.</i> . . . .															E		
Cattermole, R. . . .										E	E			E			
Cawse, J. . . .						<i>a</i>						E	E	E	E		
Chalon, H. B. . . .											E						
CHALON, J. J. . . .		A	A	M	M	M	M	M									
Chantrey, F. L. . . .											E						
Childe, E. . . .															E	E	
Christmas, T. . . .															E	E	
<i>Clennell, L.</i> . . . .						<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>	E	E	E						
Clint, G. . . .																	
Collen, H. . . .																E	
Collins, <i>Miss</i> . . . .																E	
Coney, J. . . .								<i>a</i>								E	
Cooper, A. . . .									E	E	E	E	E			E	
Cooper, G. . . .								<i>a</i>								E	
Corbould, H. . . .											E						
Cotton, <i>Miss</i> . . . .																E	

<sup>1</sup> See List *supra*, pp. 271-273





EXHIBITORS &C.—*continued.*

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF															
	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820
Jones, <i>Miss</i> (E.) . . .										E					E	E
Kangeisser, H. F. . .																
Kendrick or Kenrick } <i>Miss</i> (E.E.)											E	E	E	E	E	E
Kidd, W. . . . .														E		
King, J. . . . .										E						E
Knight, <i>Miss</i> . . . .																E
Landseer, E. . . . .												E	E	E		E
Landseer, H. . . . .													E	E		E
Landseer, <i>Mis</i> . . . .													E	E		E
Leslie, C. . . . .													E	E		
Lewis, F. C. . . . .										E		E	E	E	E	E
LEWIS, J. F. . . . .														E		E
Lewis, G. . . . .										E		E	E			
LINNELL, J. . . . .									M	M	M	M	T	M	M	M
Linton, W. . . . .														E		E
Lonsdale, J. . . . .													E			
MACKENZIE, F. . . . .							a	a	M	M	M	M				E
Maisey, T. . . . .															E	E
Mandy, J. C. . . . .									E						E	
Miller, J. H. . . . .												E				
Morton, H. . . . .									E	E	E	E				
Mulready, <i>Mrs.</i> . . . .									E	E	E	E	E	E		
Munn, P. S. . . . .		A	A	A	A	A	A	A								
NASH, F. . . . .				a	a	A	M	M	E					E	E	E
NATTES, C. . . . .	M	M	M													
Neale, J. P. . . . .													E	E		
Nicholson, — . . . .															E	
NICHOLSON, F. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	P		M	E				
Nicholson, <i>Miss</i> . . . .																
Parez, L. . . . .																E
Pastorini, F. C. . . . .											E					
Payne, W. . . . .					A	A	A	A								
Pellegrini . . . . .											E					
Pelletier, A. . . . .												E				
Phillips, G. H. . . . .																E
Pickering, G. . . . .											E	E	E	E		
Plant, W. . . . .																
POCOCK, N. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
Pocock, W. T. or W. J. . .													E	E		
Powell, J. . . . .				a	a	a	a	a					E	E	E	
PROUT, S. . . . .							a	a			E	E	E	E	E	
PUGIN, A. . . . .			A	A	A	A	A	A	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
PYNE, W. H. . . . .	M	M	M	M							E					
REINAGLE, R. R. . . . .		A	T	T	P	P	P	P								
(Richardson, M. . . . .														E		
Richardson, T. M. . . . .															E	E
RICHTER, H. . . . .					a	a	a	a	M	E		E			E	E
RIGAUD, S. T. . . . .	M	M	M	M	T	T	T	T							E	E
Roberts, J. A. . . . .									E							
Roberts, T. S. or S. T. . .					a							E				
Robertson, A. . . . .												E	E	E	E	E
Robertson, J. . . . .												E	E	E		
Robertson, G. J. . . . .						a			E		E	E	E	E		E
ROBSON, G. F. . . . .						a	a	a	E	M	M	M	M	M	M	E
Roe, <i>Miss</i> . . . . .									E							E

<sup>1</sup> Pugin was elected Member on 8 June, 1812, after the exhibition for that year had been held.

EXHIBITORS &C.—*continued.*

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF																
	1805	1806	1807	1808	1809	1810	1811	1812	1813	1814	1815	1816	1817	1818	1819	1820	
Rouw, P. . . . .									E	E	E	E	E				
Sauerweid, A. . . . .											E						
Schetky, J. or A. . . . .												E	E				
Schetky, J. C. . . . .				a	a	a	a	a				E	E	E			
Schoenberger . . . . .												E	E				
Scotney, F. . . . .										E							
Scott, W. . . . .							A	A	E	E	E	E		E	E	E	
Severn, J. . . . .													E				
SHELLEY, S. . . . .	T	T	M	M													
Shepherd, G. . . . .											E	E					
Smith, G. . . . .												E	E				
Smith, G. W. . . . .															E	E	
SMITH, J. . . . .			M	M	M	M	M	M	S	P	M	S	P	P	T	E	
Smith, W. . . . .										E	E	E		E	E	E	
Stanley, C. R. . . . .								a								E	
Stark, J. . . . .													E	E	E	E	
Stein, R. . . . .																E	
Stephanoff, F. P. . . . .					a	a	a		E		E			E	E	E	
STEPHANOFF, J. . . . .					a	a	a	a	E	E	E	E	E	E	M	M	
STEVENS, F. . . . .		A	A	A	A	M	M	M				E			E		
Stewart, Miss M. . . . .															E		
Stowers, T. . . . .									E	E							
Stump, S. J. . . . .								a		E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
Sumpter, H. . . . .													E			E	
Thomson, W. J. . . . .				a	a										E	E	
Thurston, J. . . . .		A															
TURNER, W. . . . .				A	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Tytler, G. . . . .															E		
UWINS, T. . . . .					A	A	M	M	M	S	M	M	S	S			
Van Worrell, A. B. . . . .																E	
VARLEY, C. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	T	M	M	M	M	M	
VARLEY, J. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	
Villiers, Huet . . . . .									E								
Vincent, G. . . . .														E		E	
Walker, W. . . . .				a	a	a	a	a	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	E	
Walton, Miss . . . . .											E	E	E	E	E	E	
Ward, J. . . . .																	
Watson, S. . . . .															E		
Watts, W. H. . . . .				a								E				E	
Webster, M. . . . .																	
WELLS, F. W. . . . .	M	P	P	M	M	M	M	M						E			
WESTALL, W. . . . .				a	a		A	M									
White, Mrs. C. . . . .									E								
White, W. . . . .															E		
Whitehead, J. . . . .																E	
WILD, C. . . . .					A	A	A	A <sup>1</sup>		E	E		E	E	E	E	
Wilson, J. . . . .																E	
Woodman, R. . . . .																E	
Worrell, A. B. . . . .															E		
Wyon, W. . . . .										E							
Zeigler, H. (B.) . . . .													E	E	E	E	

<sup>1</sup> Wild was elected Member on 8 June, 1812, after the exhibition for that year had been held.

The numbers of exhibitors and works exhibited at Spring Gardens in the several seasons from 1813 to 1820 are set forth in the following schedule.

Year	Works	Members	+	Exhibitors	=	Total of Artists Exhibiting
1813	250	18	+	29	=	47
1814	308	16	+	35	=	51
1815	359	17	+	51	=	68
1816	325	15	+	56	=	71
1817	305	15	+	51	=	66
1818	369	14	+	52	=	66
1819	350	14	+	60	=	74
1820	382	15	+	81	=	96





## BOOK VI

### THE PRESIDENCY OF CRISTALL, 1821-1831

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#### CHAPTER I

##### SETTLEMENT IN PALL MALL EAST

Resettlement of constitution—Third period—Exhibition of 1821—Experience of water-colours—Fawkes collection—Final biography of *Holmes*—Elections and exhibition of 1822—Lease of Gallery in Pall Mall East—Members and Associates in 1823—Final biographies of *J. Smith*, *Stevens*, and *Allport*.

SEVERAL reasons combine to render the year 1820 a convenient epoch at which to mark the close of one period of these annals and the commencement of another. It was an era not only in the Society's, but in the nation's history ; for it began a new reign, although the king who now mounted the throne had long been regent. It is worthy of note, too, in the chronicle of British art, that the same date has been assigned as the end of the first, or student period, of the great Turner's career, when, having acquired and assimilated whatever was to be learnt from older masters, he began to march alone, and trust to his unaided impressions of nature.<sup>1</sup> So, too, on entering the twenty-first year of the present century, the water-colour school, as represented by our Society, may be regarded as no longer *in statu pupillari*, but as on the point of attaining its artistic majority, and entitled to cast off the guardianship and support of professors and practitioners in oil and varnish.

If the mixed Society at Spring Gardens were anxious to establish a continuity<sup>2</sup> between their exhibitions and those of the 'old water-colour,' the reformed body had even stronger motives for doing so at

<sup>1</sup> Ruskin's *Notes on the Turner Gallery*, 1856. 1857.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 287.

the present epoch. They had moreover a better case to support their theory ; for in 1820 there was no formal break-up of an old corporation and piecing of its fragments to form a new one, as there had been in 1812. Those who had been Members of the 'Oil and Water Colour' remained so, without re-election, when the element of oil was excluded from the Society's gallery and from the title which they retained. Perhaps, indeed, it savoured too much of a legal subtlety to contend, that the original society was not wholly extinct, but that there still remained a *scintilla juris* which could be so rekindled as to place them, as a conveyancing lawyer would say, '*in* of their old estate,' and to justify their title to call the exhibition of 1821, as they did, the 'seventeenth' of the 'Society of Painters in Water-Colours.'

It has already been shown that by the end of 1820 the reformed Society consisted of fifteen Members and four Associates. In February 1821 these numbers were raised to seventeen and five respectively, and the total number of artists to twenty-two. An analysis of the lists shows that thirteen of the former class were or had been Members also of the Oil and Water Colour Society. Among them there still remained, alone of the original stock, *George Barret*, *Joshua Cristall*, and *John Varley* ; with two other Members of the first period, old 'Warwick' *Smith*, and *Turner* 'of Oxford.' These, as we have seen, had been constant to the Society through all its vicissitudes. *Miss Byrne*, who had exhibited but once at Wigley's Rooms, had come back now as a Member ; and *Pugin* and *Wild*,<sup>1</sup> and *Cox* and *Fielding*, of whom the last two only had been Members in the oil-and-water period, were all now included in that higher rank. *Robson*, *Prout*, and *Allport*, with the figure painters *J. Stephanoff* and (nominally) *Holmes* and *Richter*, also remained or again became Members ; the new name of *Mrs. T. H. Fielding*<sup>1</sup> completing the set of seventeen. The five Associates were *W. J. Bennett*, *H. Gastineau*,<sup>1</sup> *J. D. Harding*, all of whom have yet to be made better known to the reader, the former Associate *W. Scott*, and *William Walker*, already mentioned as a constant Exhibitor at Spring Gardens.

At general meetings held in June and July 1820, the constitution of the Society was resettled as follows. While the number of Members was to remain limited to twenty, a body of Associate Exhibitors was again established, not to exceed twelve, from whom

<sup>1</sup> Elected 12 Feb. 1821.



future Members were to be elected, at the rate of at least one every year, should there be a vacancy, the first list being of course made up without this preliminary stage. The status of the lady artists was put on the following footing. They were to 'be called Members, and have the rights of Associate Exhibitors, being subject to no expenses nor trouble of business in the Society;' but, on the other hand, they were not 'to have any interest in the receipts.' A council of Members, which had been called into existence in 1816, was abolished, and the business of the Society again confided solely to a Committee, chosen from the whole body, but henceforth by ballot, instead of rotation. The system of premiums was continued, but confined to Members of at least a year's standing. One only was granted for the ensuing season, and it fell by lot to John Varley. The list of Members and Associates having been settled as before mentioned, the annual election of officers took place, and Cristall was appointed first President of the reformed Society.<sup>1</sup>

The Presidency of Joshua Cristall lasted for the next eleven years; and this portion of time, from the close of 1820 to that of 1831, forms a convenient division, which will be treated as a Third Period in our annals of the Water-Colour Society. For the first six of these years the President was supported by Fielding as Secretary, and for the remaining five by Wild. The post of Treasurer was held in 1821 and 1822 by Smith, and then by Wild for the four years ending with 1826. When made Secretary in 1827 he transferred it to Hills, who retained it to the end of the term.

The first exhibition at the Egyptian Hall was opened on Monday, the 22nd of April, and remained open till the end of June. In order to mark it specially as a new departure, the following announcement was prefixed to the catalogues: 'The Lease of the Room at Spring Gardens, lately occupied by the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, having expired, and their new Exhibition Room being less spacious than the former, they have taken the opportunity to revert to the original plan on which the Society was established in 1804, by confining their Exhibitions to Works executed by the

<sup>1</sup> Among the many mistakes which have been made respecting the earlier history of our Society, is an allegation that Cristall was first President of the *first* Water-Colour Society, in 1804. This, as we have seen, was not the case. Gilpin filled that office. Cristall had been President (of the Oil and Water Colour) in 1816 and 1819, but never before. A portrait of Cristall inscribed with the above erroneous statement still hangs on the wall of the staircase that leads up to the Society's gallery.

Members of the Society, and in WATER-COLOURS ONLY. This alteration, they have reason to hope, will be generally approved ; and they trust their removal will not operate to diminish the patronage they have hitherto enjoyed, and which has enabled them to promote the improvement of their art, by distributing the profits of the Exhibition, as Premiums, for the encouragement of meritorious and elaborate Works.'

It was also felt that this was a fit occasion to set forth in a succinct manner the position of water-colour art in general, and to urge its claims to extended public recognition. The following manifesto was accordingly drawn up and printed by way of further introduction :<sup>1</sup> 'Painting in Water colours may justly be regarded as a new art, and, in its present application, the invention of British Artists ; considerations which ought to have some influence on its public estimation and encouragement. Within a few years the materials employed in this species of painting, and the manner of using them, have been equally improved, by new chemical discoveries, and successful innovations on the old methods of practice. The feeble tinted drawings formerly supposed to be the utmost efforts of this art, have been succeeded by pictures not inferior in power to oil paintings, and equal in delicacy of tint, and purity and airiness of tone. Those who are acquainted with the splendid collection of Walter Fawkes, Esq.,<sup>2</sup> that liberal and judicious patron of the Fine Arts, and of this art in particular, must be sensible of these modern improvements ; which must also be well known to all who have compared the neat but inefficient drawings of Sandby, Hearne, and

<sup>1</sup> It was written by a Mr. Corner, who must have died soon after ; for a gratuity to his widow was voted on 30 November, 1824.

<sup>2</sup> The collection of Mr. Fawkes, of Farnley Hall, celebrated for its magnificent array of drawings by the great Turner, had recently been shown to the public by the owner at his town house, No. 45 Grosvenor Place. The exhibition was opened on Tuesday, the 9th of April, 1819, when the 'crowded room of beauty and fashion,' as the reporter of the day has it, was 'the first visible sign of the diffusion of that system originated by Sir John Leicester' (afterwards Lord De Tabley), whose fine collection of British artists had been similarly thrown open in the foregoing year. Besides forty water-colour drawings by Turner, Mr. Fawkes's gallery contained twenty-five by 'T. Fielding, J. Smith, J. [sic] Robson, J. Atkinson, J. Varley, R. Hill, P. Dewinte [sic], J. Glover, S. Prout, S. [sic] Gilpin, J. Ibbetson, Esq., G. Garrard, E. Swinburne, Esq., and J. [sic] Heaphy.' (*Literary Gazette*.) A copy of the catalogue, which also contains the above errors in the names, is preserved at the South Kensington Museum. 'Mr. Walter Fawkes's fine collection of drawings,' says the *Repository*, 'did more to stamp the character of' water-colour 'art upon general attention, than any other effort within our recollection.' An important part of the Fawkes collection was dispersed at Christie's in 1890.

others of their day, with the works which have been introduced to public notice in the exhibitions of the Royal Academy and of this Society. But when this art first began to develop new and extensive powers, the prejudices which probably originated in a contempt of its ancient feebleness, degenerated into a species of hostility, not very consistent with philosophy, or a genuine attachment to the Fine Arts. As the beauty and power of water colours were incontrovertible, an opinion was industriously spread abroad, that these qualities were evanescent, and the material on which these works were executed, so frail and perishable, that the talents of the artist were rendered useless by the ephemeral nature of his productions. Some failures which occurred in the infancy, or experimental age of the art, might appear, to a superficial observer, to justify these objections; but no philosophical reasons ever were, or could be, adduced against the possibility of producing, by means of water-colours, pictures equal in beauty and permanency of colour, as well as durability, to those executed in oil.

‘These prejudices, however, which once operated so powerfully as to occasion the exclusion of paintings in water colours from the Gallery of the British Institution,<sup>1</sup> have now, in great measure, yielded to the evidence of many excellent works which have stood the test of several years uninjured; and the total extinction of such notions may be confidently anticipated as near at hand,<sup>2</sup> although some critics, better acquainted (it is hoped) with books than paintings, still occasionally lament the infatuation of artists in throwing away so much time and talent on materials of so perishable a nature. Surely such writers must have forgotten (if they ever knew) that the cartoons of Raphael, executed *on paper, in water colours*, have already lasted above 300 years, without being much indebted to the conservative care of their successive owners; and that there are now in the King’s Library at Paris many illuminated paper manuscripts, of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, in excellent preservation, of which the materials are all similar to those now used in water-colour paintings. But it must be recollected, that the only material question

<sup>1</sup> The British Institution was founded in 1805, ‘to encourage and reward the talents of the artists of the United Kingdom.’ Its first exhibition was in 1806. It was thus established a year after the Water-Colour Society.

<sup>2</sup> It is curious to compare this anticipation with the lengthy and animated controversy started in the columns of the *Times* sixty-five years after, which resulted in the appointment of a committee of inquiry on the subject.



is the comparative durability of oil and water colours ; neither of which are, like enamel-painting, calculated for eternal preservation. Whatever imperfection may still exist in water-colour paintings, they must be allowed their advantages, as they are not, like those in oil, liable to the change in the oil itself, of the lead which enters into so many pigments, of the varnish, the dirt and smoke which it acquires, and, above all, of the destructive practices of picture cleaners, which, however reprehensible, originate in the imperfection of the materials of oil pictures. These remarks are not intended to disparage oil painting ; the Society being well convinced of its advantages ; but they feel it due to themselves to give their art the benefit of a fair comparison.'

As intimated in the above advertisement, the exhibition was but small ; indeed, the number of works hung amounted to 191 only, which was considerably lower than in any previous year. Limited as the space was, there had in fact been no small difficulty in filling the room. As it was, more than two-thirds of its contents were contributed by six Members, namely Fielding, who sent 35 drawings, Robson 26, Barret 20, and Cristall, Prout and Wild 19 each ; and nearly one-third by the first two. Fielding told Mr. Jenkins that Robson was particularly energetic, both in working himself and pressing other Members to work ; so much so that when Cristall called upon him, he would hardly see him. 'I did not ask him to sit down,' said Robson in relating the incident to Fielding. 'What right had he to be out in the day-time ? He ought to have been at home at work for the gallery.'

At this time the prolific help of John Varley must have been sorely missed, for his power of rapid production was known to be invaluable in emergencies of the kind. On such occasions, he had no need to remain in the studio all day like Cristall, but would go home at night, and bring down, without fail, to the gallery a bundle of fresh drawings in the morning. They got a name, among the Members, of 'Varley's Hot Rolls.' But his energies were probably concentrated now upon his premium drawing. It was one of three works only which he sent ; but the description of it filled as much proportionate space in the catalogue as his works usually did on the walls. The title was, 'Scene from the *Bride of Abydos*,' and it was accompanied by a page and two-thirds of descriptive verses from Byron's poem, canto 28. It is spoken of as a solemn composition,

with the 'thousand tombs' and tall 'glooming' cypresses, telling dark against a western evening sky.<sup>1</sup>

The critics of the press gave rather discordant reports of the general quality of the collection. According to the 'Magazine of the Fine Arts' it was 'one of the best ever made;' while the 'Monthly Magazine' declares it 'a dull monotonous repetition of former years' worn-out landscapes.' There was evidently some party feeling at work.

In a business point of view the experiment might be regarded as moderately successful. The public were not attracted as they had been by the novel show of 1805. Only 8,715 persons paid for admission, buying among them 3,718 catalogues; but a surplus of 44*l.* 4*s.* remained after the payment of expenses, and the Society was able to give a premium again for the ensuing year. This time it fell to the lot of John Smith.

In the course of the year the following changes took place in the composition of the Society. On 11 June, 1821, *Allport* resigned his Membership, with a view to devoting himself to oil painting; and *Harding*, who had been recognized as 'a young man of high promise,' was elected in his place. On 5 July, *Holmes* and *Richter*, neither of whom had sent anything to the gallery, ceased to be Members, in accordance with the rule requiring all to exhibit. The former retired at his own request. The latter, having offered no apology, was struck off the roll as a defaulter.

The loss of JAMES HOLMES was the only one that was permanent, and of him a few farewell words have to be written.

At the time when our Society was limiting itself to the original scope of a water-colour exhibition, Holmes was beginning to abandon that branch of art in favour of oils. This was the reason why he had failed to exhibit in 1821. He afterwards exerted the whole of his influence in the foundation of the Society of British Artists, which held its first exhibition in 1824; and was a constant exhibitor with that Society for a period of nearly thirty years, both in 'subject' and portraiture. A great portion of his latter years he spent in Shropshire, where his society was much relished by the county aristocracy; for his wit

<sup>1</sup> There is a slight study for this picture on a very small scale at South Kensington. The picture itself was, it is believed, bought by a Mr. Thompson, formerly a tailor in Conduit Street. Mrs. Varley is said to have sat for the figure.

and buoyant disposition never deserted him. His whole life, which terminated on the 24th of February, 1860, in sleep, without a pang, after scarcely a day's illness, seems, indeed, to have justified the remark made to him by the late Mr. Walpole, in answer to an observation on the Englishman's never-failing topic, 'Ah, Mr. Holmes, it is *always* "fine weather" with you.'

The following prints after Holmes may be found in the *Annuals*. *Keepsake*: 1829, 'The Country Girl' (engraved by C. Heath). *Amulet*: 1829, 'The Water-cress Girl' (H. C. Shenton); 1830, 'The Gleaner' (E. Finden). *Literary Souvenir*: 1831, 'The Sea-side Toilet' (E. J. Portbury); 1834, 'The Fisher's Wife' (P. Lightfoot). *Forget-me-not*: 1832, 'Don Juan and Haidee' (W. Finden), 'La Pensée' (Mrs. Hamilton); 1833, 'Count Egmont's Jewels' (S. Davenport, sketch by C. R. Leslie). Heath's *Book of Beauty*: 1840, 'The Hon. Mrs. George Anson' (W. H. Mote).

At the anniversary meeting, the existing officers were re-elected for another year. On the 11th of February, 1822, *Charles Moore* and *Francis Oliver Finch* were elected Associates; and on the 6th of April *Frederick Mackenzie* (the former Member) and *George Cattermole*, another new name.

The Exhibition opened for a second season at the Egyptian Hall on 22 April, 1822, and closed again on the 27th of June. Again a small group of Members exerted themselves to fill the gallery; Fielding bringing as many as thirty-nine drawings; and he, with Prout, Robson, and Barret, supplying more than half the collection. The show is praised as a whole by critics of the time, who give pre-eminence to Cristall for his elegant combination of figure and landscape, and particularly notice the advance of Prout, who, in a series of town views in the Rhenish Provinces, alive with market folk, was now assuming the command of the class of subjects with which his name is most associated.<sup>1</sup>

A 'splendid drawing' of the coronation of George IV. in Westminster Abbey, by Mackenzie, was also one of the features of the room. Architecture, indeed, more especially that of the Continent, afforded an important part of the attractions of the gallery, to which Wild contributed greatly by views of foreign cathedrals. Smith had painted for his premium a 'General View of the City and Bay of Naples, from

<sup>1</sup> *Repository of Arts*, xiii. 358.



the heights above Capo di Monte ;' and Varley had composed another work of more serious ambition than usual, entitled ' Destruction of the City of Tyre,' a kind of landscape which would doubtless, in the nomenclature of Turner's *Liber*, have been marked as *historical* with a capital H. To the Society, however, the result of the experiment was not very encouraging. The drawings numbered 175 only ; there were but 7,037 paying visitors ; and, in the end, the Members found themselves more than 6*l.* in debt, and had to institute a whip to cover the deficiency and meet contingent expenses.

Thus the general results of these two exhibitions were not such as to engender much confidence in the future prospects of the Society, unless some further means of public attraction could be secured. Efforts were therefore made to add to the numerical strength of the exhibitors, and in the mean time to provide accommodation for the larger exhibitions which might be hoped for after such addition. The want of a settled home was still felt to be a serious drawback to the establishment of the Society as a permanent institution ; and inquiries were again set on foot with a view to obtaining a gallery it could call its own. Various proposals were received for building and letting rooms to the Society ; but, having cast their eye on an exhibition gallery already in course of erection in Pall Mall East, they deputed two of their Members, Wild and Robson, to endeavour to obtain the use of it for three months in the season. The result of their negotiation was, that by Christmas the Society had signed a lease, for seven years, at an annual rent of 260*l.*, of the new gallery. Thereupon the building assumed the name of the *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*,<sup>1</sup> and these words in stucco letters were placed conspicuously over the entrance.

This matter being thus satisfactorily settled, and divers votes of thanks having been passed to persons who had been instrumental in the obtaining of such ' advantageous terms ' (Robson in one case contributing a twenty-two guinea drawing as a testimonial to one Mr. Hicks, for ' liberal and able exertions on behalf of the Society '), the question of an increase of numbers came to be considered. *Frederick Mackenzie* had been again raised to the rank of Member on the 10th of the previous June (1822) ; and offers of a renewal of their Member-

<sup>1</sup> The numbering since has slightly varied. In 1823 it was No. 6. From 1824 to 1874 (except that from 1828 to 1843 no number is given in the catalogues) it is ' 5 ' ; and from 1875 to the present year it has been ' 5 A. '

ship were now made to Atkinson, Chalon, De Wint, Heaphy, Hills, and Nash ; and afterwards to Stevens. Of these, however, only *Hills* and *Stevens* accepted the offer. Accordingly, on 11 January and 10 February, 1823, respectively, these two artists again took their former rank in the Society. On the latter day also, *Miss Barret* and *Miss M. Scott* were elected lady Members, and *W. A. Nesfield*, *R. H. Essex*, *S. Jackson*, and *J. Whichelo*, Associates. On 30 April, 1823, *Allport*, who, as aforesaid, had retired from Membership, was re-admitted as Associate. *Richter* was also allowed to exhibit again in a like capacity, without going through the formality of a fresh election.

The set of artists who combined their forces to form the exhibition of 1823 comprised, therefore, the following names. Those distinguished by an asterisk had been added to the Society since 1821 ; but most of them had exhibited as 'outsiders' at Spring Gardens.

There were twenty MEMBERS (including the four ladies), namely :—

George Barret	* J. D. Harding	James Stephanoff
* Miss Barret	Robert Hills	F. Stevens
Miss Byrne	F. Mackenzie	* Miss Scott
David Cox	Samuel Prout	William Turner
Joshua Cristall	Augustus Pugin	John Varley
Copley Fielding	G. F. Robson	Charles Wild
* Mrs. T. H. Fielding	John Smith	

The *Associates* were twelve, namely :—

H. C. Allport	* H. Gastineau	H. Richter
* W. T. Bennett	* S. Jackson	W. Scott
R. H. Essex	* C. Moore	W. Walker
* F. O. Finch	* W. Nesfield	* J. Whichelo

Some account of the shares of these different artists in the then forthcoming series of exhibitions, and detailed notices of the new comers, will be given after a glance at statistics, and the general history of the Society from 1823 to 1831. The way must first, however, be cleared by a few parting words respecting three artists, whose names appear in the exhibition catalogue for the last time in 1823. They are *John Smith*, *Francis Stevens*, and *H. C. Allport*.

JOHN SMITH was seventy-five when he resigned his Membership

on the 1st December, 1823, having ceased a year before to be Treasurer. He had exhibited twelve more works since the reform (making a total of 154 since 1807<sup>1</sup>), one of them being the premium drawing in 1822 above mentioned. There is a view by him of Fountains Abbey in *Facsimiles of Water-Colour Drawings* (Bowyer), 1825. He had resided since 1816 at 25 Bryanston Street, Portman Square; but died, in his eighty-second year, in 'Middlesex Place, Marylebone Road, March 22, 1831, and was buried in the vault under St. George's Chapel, Uxbridge Road;' <sup>2</sup> by the little row of houses which contained his old studio and those of Paul Sandby and Tom Girtin, between whose schools of painting he had in a former age fashioned a connecting link in the historic chain of water-colour art.

FRANCIS STEVENS after his re-election gives the address 'South Street, Exeter,' and has three drawings from the North Devon and Somerset coast in 1823,<sup>3</sup> from which date we find no after-record of his existence. He had sent seventy-four drawings in all from 1806 to the Water-Colour and Oil and Water Colour Societies, and Mr. Graves enumerates sixteen works of his at the Royal Academy and two at the British Institution between 1804 and 1822. There was a pencil likeness of Stevens among others in the sale at Christie's, in July 1875, of effects of C. Varley, deceased, probably one of the set of profiles taken mechanically for his brother's studies in 'Zodiacal Physiognomy.'

H. C. ALLPORT had exhibited four landscapes, chiefly of Italian subjects, as Associate in 1823; and his name also passes out of the record at that date. Of his death, as of his birth, the time has not been ascertained. The last address he gave was 'Shenstone Cottage, Litchfield,' he having previously dated from 'Aldridge.' He had had thirty drawings in the gallery from 1813. Dr. Percy in his MS. catalogue, now at the British Museum, reports that he 'is believed to have given up art for commerce, and to have been engaged in the wine trade.' His surname was one to give colour to the rumour.

<sup>1</sup> As we do not find his name in Graves's index, it may be inferred that he did not exhibit at the Royal Academy or the other galleries to which that list extends.

<sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary* (thus correcting the date 1812 given in the *Century of Painters*, i. 386, an obvious error, which may have originated in a confusion with John Raphael Smith, who died in that year).

<sup>3</sup> In the catalogue of the 'Norwich Society of Artists' for this year, his name is in the list of Honorary Members, with the address 'London.'



## CHAPTER II

## THE OLD MEMBERS

Increasing prosperity—Amateurs excluded—Loan exhibition—Society of British Artists—National Gallery—Biographies continued to 1831—*Cristall—Barret—J. Varley—Hills—Havell* (to death)—*Turner*.

THE removal to Pall Mall East proved to be the recommencement of a series of years of annually increasing prosperity. The number of visitors leaped up at the first bound from 7,037 to 11,139, and was more than doubled in the first four years, being 14,234 in 1826; thus repeating the success of the original Society in Brook Street and Pall Mall. The deficit was turned into an annual surplus,<sup>1</sup> which, instead of being divided among Members on the old system, was for the most part employed in the payment of premiums, until the Society was also enabled to start an accumulating fund, by investments in the names of trustees. Beginning with 100*l.* in the year last mentioned, when there was a balance in hand of more than 500*l.*, this reserve fund amounted to 700*l.* by the end of 1828; and the sum added to the investments in 1831, the last year of Cristall's presidency, was as much as 400*l.* Nor had the annual distribution of premiums remained stationary. In 1825 two were awarded, in 1826 four, in 1827 five, in each of the years 1828-30 six, and in 1831 eight. It is less easy to measure the professional profit which had accrued to the artists by virtue of the means afforded of exhibiting their works. But, by way of evidence, we have it recorded on the minutes that in 1829 sales were effected in the gallery to the value of 2,295*l.* 12*s.*; and that in 1830, out of the 401 drawings exhibited, 125 were so disposed of for 1,634*l.* 16*s.*, 100 more having been previously sold. The unsold must thus have been 176. It should be noted, however, that it was resolved on the 18th of May, 1825, that no drawing should be exhibited for sale under the price of four guineas.

<sup>1</sup> Some additional income was derived from the underletting of the gallery, when not in use by the Society. It was thus on hire to Colonel David in the winter of 1822-23, and to Sir Thomas Lawrence in 1823-25.

On the 1st of December, 1823, a resolution was passed extending to sixteen the limit allowed for the number of Associate Exhibitors. In practice, however, it never exceeded fifteen during this period, and the immediate result appears to have been to diminish instead of to increase that class; for at the next selection of candidates, on the 29th of February, 1824, an unusual flock came forward, attracted no doubt by this enlargement of the rule. In the examination of their claims a question arose, of no small moment to the Society, both as regarded its own status and the future quality of its exhibitions. Two of the candidates at least were not artists by profession, although one, the Rev. John Eagles, was well known as an able amateur of the brush, as well as an enthusiastic and judicious lover of and a scholarly critic on art.<sup>1</sup> Both these gentlemen<sup>2</sup> were excluded from the ballot on the general ground that amateurs were not admissible into the Society. Out of the remaining five candidates one only was elected, namely *John Masey Wright*, of whom more hereinafter.

The following table, compiled from the catalogues, shows the numbers of Members and Associates, distinguishing in the former class the lady Members, whose status, as we have seen, was exceptional; and the number of works exhibited in the gallery in each year during Cristall's presidency.

Year	Full Members	Ladies	Associates	Total	Works Exhibited
1821	15	2	5	22	191
1822	13	2	7	22	174
1823	18	4	12	34	303
1824	17	4	11	32	307
1825	19	4	10	33	345
1826	20	4	9	33	284
1827	22	4	12	38	360
1828	22	4	14	40	366
1829	23	6	15	44	401
1830	23	6	14	43	366
1831	24	6	15	45	427

The first two exhibitions were held at the Egyptian Hall, the rest in Pall Mall East.

The year 1823 was further marked by the formation, after the close of the regular exhibition, of another which was retrospective

<sup>1</sup> His set of papers entitled 'The Sketcher' were written in 1833-35, in *Blackwood's Magazine*, and republished in 1856, after the author's death.

<sup>2</sup> The other was a Mr. Maundrell.

in character. Probably it was the first<sup>1</sup> important 'loan collection' of water-colour drawings done in previous years, and the father of the many gatherings of the same kind held in later times. The arrangements and conduct of the scheme having been entrusted to a sub-committee consisting of Robson, Wild, and Fielding, a liberal response was made by proprietors to the Society's request, and a collection of 212 representative drawings were placed together in the gallery. These were not limited to works by Members and Associates, either past or present, but extended to those executed prior to 1822 by any British artists, living or dead. The great majority were, however, taken from the former class, among the few exceptions being no less than twenty drawings by Girtin, and one only by the great Turner, namely, a view of 'Tivoli,'<sup>2</sup> belonging to J. Allnutt, Esq., who was the largest contributor on the occasion. By this gentleman and J. Vine, Esq., together, the collection was enriched by upwards of sixty drawings, lent in nearly equal numbers; W. Leader, Esq., M.P., coming next with a loan of fifteen. The King lent Holmes's picture of 'The Michaelmas Dinner,' and among other contributors were the following noblemen and gentlemen, for the most part well known as collectors and patrons of water-colour art; namely, the Duke of Argyll (who lent the shipwreck scene by Cristall before mentioned); the Marquises of Hertford and Stafford; Earls Brownlow, Carlisle, Lonsdale and Tankerville; the Earl and Countess of Essex (Cassio-bury yielding its quota of Girtin drawings); Sir J. Swinburne and Sir Robert Harry Inglis, Baronets; the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., the Rev. Dr. Burney, and Messrs. T. Griffiths (twelve works), J. Gwilt, G. Hibbert, E. H. Locker, F.R.S., T. Tomkison, W. Wells, and B. Windus. Ackermann the publisher sent half a dozen of Mackenzie's drawings made for his architectural books. The collections of Messrs. Allnutt and Vine being rich in works by Cristall, the President was strongly represented in no less than thirty-four works, nearly half of which were lent by his friend in the Isle of Wight. There were twenty

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1822, W. B. Cooke, the engraver, commenced a series of annual exhibitions at 9 Soho Square, the collection of 163 works being partly historical, and professing to 'present a connected view of the Progress of the Art of Drawing in this country, from the time of Paul Sandby to the present day.' Catalogues for the three years 1822-4 are in the South Kensington Art Library (Wm. Smith bequest). The exhibition of 1824 is noticed at length and with much praise in the *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 8, 129, 142. Lady Long and Dr. Monro were among the lenders, the former sending some of Girtin's drawings, and the latter some of the slides of Gainsborough's camera.

<sup>2</sup> Well known by E. Goodall's large line engraving, published by Colnaghi & Co. in 1827.



by Havell, thirteen by Varley (among them the 'Bride of Abydos'), ten by Clennell, and the same number by the ever abundant Copley Fielding. The Loan Exhibition attracted 4,238 visitors, and produced a surplus of receipts over costs out of pocket of more than 31*l.*, which was divided among the Members of the Sub-Committee in proportion to time and labour expended.

Until the end of Cristall's presidency, the Society remained without competition, the sole body holding annual exhibitions of works in water-colour *exclusively*, their only formidable rival as yet having been the short-lived partnership of 'Associated Artists,' started in 1808. There were, however, other galleries where water-colours were admitted as well as oils. The Royal Academy still gave them a place, such as it was, at Somerset House; though the British Institution had, as we have seen, excluded them altogether from their gallery in Pall Mall. The *Norwich Society of Artists*, the foundation of which was also coeval with our own, and which still continued to hold exhibitions, admitted works in both media. And in 1823 a new society was formed, which effected on a more substantial basis the union that had been attempted with such doubtful success at Spring Gardens. This was the *Society of British Artists*, which opened its first exhibition at Suffolk Street in April 1824. Here, while oil pictures were made the primary and main attraction, a separate room was from the first devoted to water-colour art; thus anticipating the plan adopted by the Royal Academy when it removed to Trafalgar Square, and adhered to since. Heaphy and Glover were, as before stated, among its founders, and Heaphy was its first president, an office held soon after by Holmes.

The same year 1824 is an epoch of yet greater note in the history of institutions connected with art, as being the date of the virtual foundation of the *National Gallery*, by the purchase of the Angerstein collection. It is only, however, within comparatively recent years that British water-colours have been accorded a place among the schools there represented.

The names of four Members who contributed to the first Water-Colour Society's exhibition in 1805 were in the catalogue for 1823. These are *Joshua Cristall*, *George Barret*, *John Varley*, and *Robert Hills*. The first three had never been absent. The last had been replaced in that year in the list of Members, after an interval of

ten seasons. All four contributed in undiminished strength to the exhibitions of the period then opening.

JOSHUA CRISTALL had occupied the presidential chair in two previous years, 1816 and 1819 (and also been Treasurer in 1820), when he was recalled to it in 1821 for a more lasting tenure of office. He was then residing, as above stated, in Lisson Street, New Road; and, for him, the time was one of comparative prosperity. He was highly esteemed in his profession, and had married a lady of cultivated mind and attractive manners, who, though she brought him no family, contributed to make his house the resort of many persons distinguished in literature and art. But Cristall was one upon whom Fortune was never lavish of her smiles. Happy as were his domestic relations, there was always some shade of care upon his hearth. It has been already related how want of strength prevented him from taking up oils; and no doubt the hardships of early life had told upon his health. In March 1819 his wife writes thus to a confidential friend: 'Mr. Cristall has been seriously ill with one of his dreadful colds, succeeded by fever, &c. You will readily judge from the details what a charming frame of mind I have been in; especially when you remember the state of our affairs, and the very little hope I have of Mr. C.'s ever doing anything in his profession. One great comfort you have over *us*. You are *not* in debt. Breathe, my dear friend, freely and cheerily under that idea.' 'Our old friend Cristall,' wrote Uwins to Severn, ten years later, 'used to say, "The art was not so difficult as it was to get at the art." The thousand annoyances and embarrassments that surrounded him perpetually, and kept him from sitting down fairly to the easel, sometimes overwhelmed him quite.'<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Cristall's well-grounded apprehension that her husband would never be able to attain commercial success by means of his art, seems to have been the motive which led to his painting and exhibiting portraits in 1819-20; but upon the revival of the water-colour exhibitions in the following season, the President returned to his proper range of subjects. His spouse's anxiety on the score of health had a foundation no less real than that which concerned his profession. He had scarcely been President two years, when the home in Marylebone had to be broken up, for a move into the country in search of purer air; partly for her benefit, as well as his own, and partly to gratify a desire for rural life, which was common to both.

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 246.

They settled at Goodrich on the Wye, where 'Grantont Cottage' was the name of Cristall's residence during the rest of his married and also of his official life. He is said to have bought the house under the advice of his friend Mr. (afterwards Sir Samuel) Meyrick, the noted connoisseur and collector of armour, who was himself the purchaser of Goodrich Court hard by. The little house comprised a 'small parlour, hall, kitchen, and offices on the ground floor,' and a 'sitting room and two bedrooms on the upper floor.' A 'building detached' was 'used as a studio.'<sup>1</sup> Cristall's address at 'Goodrich' begins in the Society's Catalogue in 1823. That these were some of his happier years there is no reason to doubt, though 'his position in the country proved inimical to his artistic pursuits,' and he 'frequently sighed for the more congenial atmosphere of London, and the society of his brother artists.'<sup>2</sup> The Society's Minute-book shows that he was attending the meetings up to the time of the Exhibition of 1823, from which date he appears to have been President only in name; for on the 14th of May, Fielding, who held the more arduous post of Secretary, was formally appointed his deputy,<sup>3</sup> an office we find him still performing in 1830, though then no longer Secretary. Cristall had been for some years at least a member of the Sketching Society,<sup>4</sup> when his retirement into the country caused a long interruption also of the pleasant companionship he had enjoyed at their meetings.

Absence from town, however, did not prevent him from sending drawings annually to the gallery in Pall Mall East, to the number of ninety-four during the eleven consecutive years of his presidency, active or in commission. Some of the choicest examples of his art are of this time, when he was between fifty and sixty years of age, and among them the different classes of subjects were represented which he had made his own. There were landscapes, carefully studied from nature, in Wales and Scotland, but depicted with a classic generalization which omits all that is irrelevant to the prevailing sentiment of the scene. There were many of his studies of the peasantry of the same countries, treated with the like poetic abstraction. And, latterly, he began again to send a few subjects of epic

<sup>1</sup> From the printed 'particulars' when the property was sold.

<sup>2</sup> Letter from a pupil. J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>3</sup> The Rules printed in 1823 contain provisions for the election of a Deputy-President.

<sup>4</sup> He is named as a member in December 1821, in the *Memoir of Uwins*. Mrs. M'Ketchnie, indeed, declares that the Society's meetings began at his house on a Twelfth Night.



illustration. With all this he was not making a fortune, and had again to take portraits for his modest living ; while to eke out their slender income Mrs. Cristall received one or two lady pupils to board at 'Grantton Cottage.' 'Would we could say,' writes Pyne in January, 1824, 'that Mr. Cristall could be included among the more fortunate of his compeers. Such, however, is public judgment, that the price of one indifferent Raffaele, or one doubtful Claude, paid by some credulous collector, amounts to a larger sum than would cover all the ingenious labours of his last twenty years.'<sup>1</sup> All was not *couleur de rose* at Grantton Cottage. 'We are destined,' writes Mrs. Cristall to her friend Miss Beckwith on 16 Aug. 1824, 'to receive instead of to give, and must, I fear, go on suffering and plodding to the end of our short career. Mr. C.'s philosophy has quite left him, and we vie with each other in deprecating the obduracy of the Fates and our painful lot. Yet with ease of mind our little tenement might be productive of much pleasure ; the garden is so full of bloom and fragrance, the country so full of variety and beauty.'

In 1828 Cristall exhibited two scenes from the 'Midsummer's Night's Dream,' one of which met with some curious adventures. It must have been that numbered 34, from Act 2, Scene 3, where Titania is surrounded by her train of busy fairies, who, after receiving their charges, sing her majesty to sleep, unharmed by 'spotted snakes' and the like disturbing influences. This drawing was bought by Robson, who when he had got it seems to have been dissatisfied with the composition, thinking that it wanted unity. So he set to work with a pair of scissors, neatly cut out the several groups round the outline of the figures, laid them down on sheets of white paper, and then got one or more other artists to add separate backgrounds to them. Barret was induced to do this in, at least, two instances ; and a better man could not have been selected for the purpose. One was a group of dancing fairies, to which that artist painted a beautiful seashore ; and it was exhibited in 1830, as the joint work of Cristall and Barret, with the title, 'Come unto these yellow sands.' The other included the figure of the fairy queen herself, and with a deep background of trees,<sup>2</sup> became, when exhibited next year with the same names for its painters, 'Titania with the Indian Boy.' That they made

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 195.

<sup>2</sup> Finch called Barret's background to the 'Titania : ' 'a deep wooded scene such as might have suited Una, "who made a light in a shady place."' J. J. J. MSS.

two very good and effective pictures there is no reason to doubt ; but the reviewers caught sight of the edges of some of the joined papers, and pointed to the patching as evidence of the want of durability of water-colour drawings. Cristall was naturally indignant at the way in which his works had been tampered with, justly considering that more was due to an artist than the money value of his picture ; and he appears to have made a formal complaint to the Society on the subject. As to Robson, the ill-considered action on his part was punished by a break in the friendship between the two painters, which lasted for some years ; for Cristall, though mild and most courteous in manner, had a just respect for himself, and was not a man with whom it was prudent to take an undue liberty. But he was not implacable ; for on Robson's calling on him at Goodrich some time after these events, uncertain as to his reception, he at once held out the hand of welcome, and the delinquent knew that he was forgiven.<sup>1</sup>

Whether these circumstances had anything to do with Cristall's retirement from the presidentship in 1831, is a matter for conjecture. The Minutes of a meeting on the 21st of July in that year show that not only had the Society treated the exhibition of a drawing without his consent as a matter beyond their control, but that he had also complained that a law proposed by him had (as he thought) been rejected without due consideration. At the same meeting his resignation was announced, on the ground of an 'intention to continue absent from London.'

The full development of GEORGE BARRET's art is displayed during this as well as the following period. He has fairly shaken off the topographic element, and takes his position as a painter of light and atmospheric effect, without reference to locality. Out of 200 drawings which he exhibited from 1821 to 1831 scarcely a quarter belong to the former category ; and in the last five of these years there are not half a dozen ; while for 'Mornings' and 'Evenings,' 'Sunsets,' 'Twilights,' 'Moonlights,' and the like, we count about ninety, besides 'Compositions,' 'Landscapes,' Claudesque seaports and embarkations, and subjects with such titles as 'Retirement,' 'Solitude,' 'The Weary

<sup>1</sup> Messrs. Redgrave say (*Century of Painters*, i. 513) that Cristall sometimes put in groups of figures to Robson's and Barret's landscapes. The above are possibly reckoned as examples of such conjunction. No others appear to have been exhibited.

Traveller,' &c. Sometimes the artist seeks to elucidate a poet's thought and description; nearly a score of the subjects being introduced by suggestive quotations from Homer, Shakspeare, Thomson, Gray, and others, or taken from the Old Testament. Pyne writes of his compositions at this period, that the 'depth, richness, and luxuriance of contour which characterize' them, and 'are at the same time so faithful to nature, and compatible with the magnificent scenery which he delights to design, has (*sic*) grown imperceptibly from practice, which, developing from year to year new powers in the material in which he works, is (*sic*) thus displayed in pictures that combine all the higher excellences of the renowned Italian school, and yet are purely original.'<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of praise of this kind the same writer uttered the following words of warning. Speaking of the process of taking out lights, so effectively employed in Turner's water-colours, he adds, in reference to a fine classic composition by Barret exhibited in 1823, executed in like manner, that 'the tints used for glazing' are 'almost entirely composed of fugitive pigments, as, carmine-lake, gambouge, yellow-lake, brown pink, &c., without the aid of which, in spite of all that is said to the contrary, those brilliant and richly harmonious combinations cannot be produced. Hence, landscape painters of great talent must be content to study for the portfolio of the munificent collector . . . unless, indeed, . . . they would forego the temptation of present applause for a more lasting though less brilliant fame, by confining themselves to the use of pigments less liable to change.'<sup>2</sup> After this, it is satisfactory to find that a series of very beautiful works by Barret were among the best preserved and freshest-looking of the drawings brought together in the summer of 1886 at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-Colours, to disprove certain assertions which had been recently made as to the inevitable fading of such works under exposure to ordinary daylight; and that among the most exquisite gems of the Jubilee collection at Manchester in 1887 were a fine set of water-colour drawings by this master, in equally good condition. Barret himself attributed the fading of early water-colour drawings to the pigment having been put on thinly, as in the case of those 'made in the old way with Indian Ink, and sometimes with gray, by the addition of Indigo Blue to it, which when finished have the

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 194.



appearance of a print meagerly tinted.' Water-colours, he contends, are 'perfectly durable when properly applied with a liberal supply of the material, and without any previous preparation of gray.'<sup>1</sup> As the following are the only colours named by Barret for the use of students in his treatise on water-colour painting, wherein the above remarks occur, it may perhaps be inferred that he confined himself to them in his own practice. They are : (*For skies*) Yellow Ochre, Burnt Sienna, Light Red, Pink Madder, Cobalt, and for a final wash to give brilliancy, Indian Yellow.—(*For other parts of the picture*). The above, with the addition of Raw Sienna, Indian Red, Brown Madder, Vandyke Brown, Brown Pink, Gamboge, and Indigo.

Besides his exhibited works, Barret also made two drawings after Claude, for the series of *Engravings from Pictures in the National Gallery* published for the 'Associated Engravers.' One of them was the 'Annunciation,' beautifully engraved in line in that work, by John Pye, whose plate is dated March 1832. For the drawing, which must have been made some years earlier, Barret received twenty-five guineas. The other picture was the 'Embarkation of the Queen of Sheba' (known as the 'Flowerpot' Claude, from a row of bough-pots on a wall in the mid-distance). Of this he made an accurate copy in 1829. Barret, in the above-quoted work, observes upon the knowledge he thus acquired of the surprising minuteness of Claude's execution, which he examined with a magnifying glass.<sup>2</sup> His estimate for this drawing was thirty guineas; but it took him so much longer than he expected, that the managing committee of engravers, with a liberality which he does not fail to acknowledge, added another 10*l.* to the price paid. The engraving was to have been by William Miller, but the undertaking of the Associated Engravers had to be wound up before this intended plate was begun. It must have been while he was fulfilling this engagement that an incident occurred which is described by the Messrs. Redgrave in the 'Century of Painters.'<sup>3</sup> 'We well remember,' they say, 'in our student days his being questioned by a group of young artists, in what was then called the Angerstein Gallery, where he was copying a picture, as to his mode of painting. He willingly explained to them his practice, and declared that no good painter ought to have "secrets."

<sup>1</sup> *Theory and Practice of Water-Colour Painting*, pp. 117, 118.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 90, 91.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. p. 491.

"Everything is in the painter's feeling," said he; "without feeling, all the secrets in the world are useless."

Comparatively few of George Barret's original works have been engraved. The best known perhaps is the 'Sunset' which formed the subject of one of the most admired gems of line engraving produced by the hand of Pye. The history of this little plate may be instructive to students and collectors of prints. It was originally engraved for the Annual called the *The Anniversary*. After 3,400 impressions had been taken from it, the plate reappeared in the last number of Sharpe's *London Magazine*. It was then bought by the proprietors of the *Amulet*, and after being cut down to suit the size of that annual, reissued in the volume for 1831 as a new and original work of art. The painter and engraver thereupon wrote a joint letter, dated 18 December, 1830, to the *Athenæum*, protesting against the injustice to both of issuing as proofs, impressions from the much used and mutilated plates. The editor of the 'Amulet,' Mr. S. C. Hall, in his answer, virtually admitted the above facts, while pleading want of knowledge of them at the time of the purchase. The original drawing, which is considerably larger than the print, was sold at Christie's in Mrs. Gibbon's sale, 17 March, 1883, for fifty-nine guineas. There are also of this period the following prints after Barret: In Cooke's *The Thames*, 'Baroness Howe's Villa and Pope's Grotto' (1 Aug. 1822), and 'Lambeth Palace;' in *The Anniversary*, 1829, 'Evening Twilight,' engraved by E. Goodall; in the *Forget-me-not*, 1831, an 'Italian Scene' (sun setting) engraved by Freebairn.

The term of Cristall's presidency was also the central age of JOHN VARLEY'S career, both professional and private. His art was then in its maturity, the most careful period being marked by the premium picture, the 'Bride of Abydos,' in 1821, and the 'Destruction of Tyre' of the next year. But he was already trying experiments of a kind which led in his later time to a method of painting more closely associated by the many with Varley's name than are the sounder qualities of his art. In or previously to 1824 he took a fancy to varnishing his drawings, though he then gave it up, not being satisfied with the effect produced. The following contemporary notice of this attempt is contained in the *Somerset House Gazette* of 25 September, 1824: 'Mr. John Varley we have lately seen busily engaged in his study, on his new process of landscape in water-colours, heightened

with white and varnished with copal. How this process would succeed for larger works is yet to be proved ; but on some of his designs in small, the style is so effective, that they approximate to the richness and depth of paintings in oil.' But the writer goes on to condemn varnished drawings in general, as involving of necessity the use of body-colour, and so discarding the quality of excellence peculiar to water-colours.<sup>1</sup>

In earlier days there had been greater jealousy of any heightening of the effect of drawings by the use of adventitious materials. The following resolution is recorded in the Minutes on the 12th of June, 1809: 'Some difficulty having been experienced by the committee of arrangement in the Spring Gardens Exhibition, owing to the introduction of a quantity of gum in certain subjects, it was resolved that such a mode of painting was injurious to the views of the Society relative to the admission of varnished drawings ; and although the works had been admitted, it was not to be taken as a precedent for the future.'

Some of Varley's works at Spring Gardens are believed to have been in oil. After the exclusion of such pictures from our gallery, he sent a few to Somerset House, where, working in one medium or the other, he from 1825 'put in an appearance' at the Royal Academy Exhibitions with a landscape nearly every year. His contributions to the Water-Colour Society during the period 1821-31 are of the same classes of subjects as before, and number 144. But his most prolific time therein was from 1823 to 1826, which gives an average of twenty-two works, after which they drop to some half-dozen a year.

Some domestic events which befell him within this period have further to be recounted. In July 1824 he lost his first wife. She died at the age (nearly his own) of forty-five, after bearing him eight children, and was buried in Paddington Churchyard. In the year of his widowhood, on the 21st of June, 1825, he was burnt out of his studio by a fire which originated at Stoddart's pianoforte factory next door, and had for a time to live in lodgings in Foley Street. It is related that Varley, with his belief in the inevitable, was in no way disturbed by the occurrence. Fielding, hearing that a fire had taken place, sought him and expressed his hope that it was not serious. 'No,' said Varley, with the utmost composure, 'only the house burnt down. I knew something would happen.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 381, 382.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *et relatione* Ward.



In the August following, he consoled himself for his losses by marrying the daughter of his old friend William Lowry, the scientific line engraver, who was his near neighbour, residing at 57 Great Titchfield Street. They had long known each other, and she would relate, when his widow, how she remembered him 'with his laughing rosy, good-natured face, telling stories to her father, and to the delighted wonderment of his children.'<sup>1</sup> Miss Lowry herself had handled the graver. There are three series of small plates published as aids to geometrical pastimes, entitled, (1) '*The only correct Chinese Puzzle, &c.*, Drawn and Engraved by Miss Lowry<sup>2</sup>—1817.' (2) '*Mosaic Amusement, or Jeu du Parquet, &c.*, the Plates Engraved by Miss Lowry, 1818;' and (3) '*Chinese Caricatures, or Puzzles representing the Human Figure*; being each composed of the seven pieces used in the Chinese Puzzles, designed by a young lady,<sup>3</sup> and engraved by Miss Lowry,' 1818.

In 1827, Varley was deprived of his strange associate William Blake, who was carried to the land of his dreams on the 12th of August, when nearly seventy years of age. In these last years of his life the two had often met at a house called Collins's Farm, Hampstead, between North End and 'The Spaniards,' where Linnell took up his residence in March 1824. Blake would walk up from Fountain Court, where he had lived since 1821; and here, at their animated discussions, Cornelius Varley and Richter were sometimes of the party.<sup>4</sup> The extraordinary treatise on 'Zodiacal Physiognomy,' before described, was brought out in the year after Blake's death.

Two years after, in May 1830, the heavenly bodies were watching with their wonted assiduity over the fortunes of No. 10½ Titchfield Street, when a frame-maker's shop, near at hand, caught fire; and our artist-philosopher was burnt out of house and home for a second time. Now fairly ejected, he left the neighbourhood, and, after occupying for a while a house in Porchester Terrace, where Linnell had resided, settled at 3 Elkin's Row, Bayswater, which address first appears in the catalogue in 1831.

ROBERT HILLS, on rejoining the Society, began again to exhibit steadily from year to year with an annual average of about seventeen

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 499.

<sup>2</sup> On some of the plates it is 'Miss D. Lowry.' A miniature portrait of her in the possession of the Varley family is endorsed 'D. R. E. Lowry, 1812.'

<sup>3</sup> The 'young lady' was the writer's aunt, Miss Roget, sister of Dr. P. M. Roget.

<sup>4</sup> Gilchrist's *Life of Blake*, pp. 29, 296.

works, making a total of 156 from 1823 to 1831. Except a few in 1825, wherein the backgrounds to his cattle are taken from the Low Countries, and three views in Jersey in 1831, the titles rarely give indications of locality. Cattle, deer, and other animals, with rustic figures, and farmyards (doubtless from Kent and Sussex), make up nearly all the list, two drawings in 1829 and 1831 having Scotch backgrounds by Robson. Two of his small subjects of this period were engraved by E. Finden for Ackermann's Annual the *Forget-me-not*, namely 'The Cottage Door,' 1826, and 'The Stag,' 1827. In the series of *Facsimiles of Water-Colour Drawings*, published by Bowyer in 1825, were three after Hills, viz.: 'Driving Cattle to Market' (pl. 2), 'Cattle &c. at Willan's Farm' (pl. 3), 'Donkies and Rustic Children' (pl. 4).

Hills, as we have seen, again became an active assistant in transacting the business of the Society, being Treasurer for 1827, and still holding that office at the time of Cristall's resignation.

One more of the first elected Members came back during this period, namely WILLIAM HAVELL; but it was only for a short time. He had been far away since his last contribution to the Spring Gardens gallery appeared, in 1816, some months after he had left England. On the 9th of February in that year he sailed for China in H.M.S. *Alceste*, Captain Sir Murray Maxwell, as 'Artist' to the Embassy of Lord Amherst. Two accounts of the voyage, by persons present with the expedition, were published in 1819; one by its surgeon, Dr. Clarke Abel, entitled *Narrative of a Journey in the Interior of China, &c.*; the other, *Voyage of H.M.S. Alceste to China, &c.*, by the ship's surgeon, Dr. John McLeod. Havell is once mentioned in the former work<sup>1</sup> as having been carried with the author in a 'dooly' to Sirang (in Java), where they remained while Lord Amherst went on to Batavia. But in neither book is there any further notice of him, except that his name and office are included in the list of his Excellency's suite, and that in the former his name is attached to one of the coloured aquatints engraved by T. Fielding. This is an effective print of a flying-fish (*Exocetus splendens*) darting over the deep, 'drawn from a sketch by W. Havell, Esq.,' on the outward passage, between Madeira and the Line. The frontispiece of 'The Waterfall at Hong Cong' (*sic*), of which the draftsman is

<sup>1</sup> Pages 26, 27.

not named, looks like his handiwork also ; but otherwise he has no acknowledged share in the graphic illustrations. The reason that we hear so little about him, and see no more of his work, may be due to an unfortunate occurrence, referred to by the Messrs. Redgrave, who inform us that, his position being rendered unpleasant by a quarrel with one of the officers of the mess, he did not remain with the *Alceste* during the entire voyage.

The good ship in which our artist had embarked carried the Embassy to Hong Kong, having visited Madeira, Rio, the Cape, and Java ; and then proceeded to the mouth of the Pei-ho, where Lord Amherst landed, and whence he made his journey to Peking. Failing there to obtain an audience with the Emperor, on a refusal to perform the *kotow*, his lordship travelled by land and river to Canton. There he was met by the *Alceste* with her consort the *Lyra*, she having in the mean time surveyed the gulf of Petchili and coast of Corea, and paid a visit to the Loochoo Islands. Whether Havell was of the ambassador's party ashore or with the ship on its cruise is not very clear. We are left in some darkness as to what scenes he visited while attached to the Embassy, and have to draw what inferences we can from the subjects of pictures exhibited after his return. The Messrs. Redgrave state, however, that ' his journal, full of descriptions of character and scenery,' was (in 1866) ' still in the possession of his sister,' Lucy, who wrote ' a short biography,' whence their account appears to be derived.<sup>1</sup> However this may be, the whole party re-embarked at Macao on the 27th of January, 1817, for Manilla, where they arrived on the 3rd of February. On the 9th the *Alceste* continued her voyage with the Embassy on board ; and shortly after, the *Lyra*, under the command of Captain Basil Hall, proceeded to India with despatches. Havell appears to have been transferred to the latter ship at Macao. The *Alceste* had the misfortune to strike on a coral reef in the straits of Gaspar, to the east of Sumatra, where she became a wreck ; the Embassy and eventually the officers and crew getting safe to Batavia, whence they returned to England in the *Cæsar*. Our artist's ship touched at Penang, where he is said to have been tempted by the extreme richness of the scenery to accept an invitation to remain ; but, declining it, he sailed on to Calcutta,

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 519, 520. The account is not free from errors, ' 9th July ' should be ' 9th February ; ' and for ' Sir Murray Maxwell ' we should read ' Captain Basil Hall.'



where he had good introductions, and soon acquired considerable practice there as a portrait painter in water-colours on a small scale. For the next eight years he remained in India so employed ; at the end of which time he had realized a small sum, but had suffered in health from cholera followed by fever. These results of exile brought him back to the land of his birth.

Such at least is the account given by the Messrs. Redgrave,<sup>1</sup> based, it may be presumed, on the memoir by the sister. But it is necessary to add the following somewhat different account, which Mr. Jenkins gives on the authority of the late Edward Duncan, R.W.S. :<sup>2</sup> 'William Havell accompanied Lord Amherst to China, as draftsman to the Embassy. On his return from China to the *Alceste* Frigate he was wrecked off the Loochoo Islands, and then made his way to India, and settled some years in Burmah ; where he made a considerable fortune from the practice of Portraiture ; which, however, ceased on the Burmese war breaking out ; and he returned to England.'

Havell, on his return, though welcomed anew to Membership, found his professional relations much changed. During the eleven years of his absence from the gallery and from home, not only had new competitors entered the field, but painters of his own standing had been developing their art in different ways from his. He had slipped, too, from the memory of old admirers, or they themselves had quitted the scene ; and it was necessary to make a fresh start if he would again secure public recognition. One of the friends who saw him writes thus on the exhibition of 1827 : 'Havell, who, excepting the loss of a few teeth, and the acquisition of a "menton de galoche," is much the same, sent some clever drawings, though I find they are not popular with the members, owing to the free use of body colour.'<sup>3</sup> They were twelve in number, three of them views at Rio de Janeiro, one from China, and the rest English subjects as of yore. But his four drawings in 1828 are of Tivoli and Rome ; and 'Rome' is his sole address in the catalogue. He had visited Florence on the way, and was located in the 'Eternal City' by the January of that year. The painter Joseph Severn, then resident there, writes as follows to Uwins in Naples : 'I have just been seeing Havell, who has taken some sketches at Albano truly sublime ; there is one of the lake, beyond anything I had ever seen.'<sup>4</sup> Two months later he is at

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, i. 520.

<sup>2</sup> Duncan's connexion, as pupil, with the Havell family will be related in due course.

<sup>3</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 184.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 232.

Naples with the last-named friend, from whose pen we have the following lively sketch of his humour when in the sunny South, under date 29 July: 'Havell says the heat is as bad as Bombay. He is for driving back as fast as possible to England; he says a year in Italy is enough to kill any man. The burning sun, the bugs, fleas, and mosquitoes! and then the necessity of suffering 365 unwholesome dinners! With all these evils and sufferings, of which he certainly makes the most, he is doing the most delicious sketches and most glorious pictures. This country, in truth, is just suited to his romantic genius; and notwithstanding the impossibility of living in it, I do not expect to see him leave it as soon as he talks of. Havell is like many of his countrymen, he will not adapt himself to the manners of the inhabitants of the place, and therefore loses all its enjoyment. . . . He wants a beefsteak with the gravy in it, and a mutton chop that will burn the mouth. He cannot eat figs for his breakfast, and maccaroni and cucuzzi for his dinner.'<sup>1</sup>

Havell's insularity of taste and John Bull notions of feeding were, however, matters of solicitude as well as jest among his artist friends abroad. At Rome an Englishwoman is secured who can 'cook him mutton chops—in short,' writes Severn, 'a complete English dinner, without either tomtits or yellow-hammers.' And Uwins takes pains to 'establish a *cucina*' for him, with which he 'consents to be satisfied,' as 'he has not been obliged to eat one cock-robin' since he came to Naples. These little peculiarities notwithstanding, he met with a cordial welcome. 'It is a glorious thing,' adds his companion, 'to find him returned from India with the same frank, ingenuous spirit, and the same warm feelings of friendship with which he parted.' And, as to the unimpaired quality of Havell's art at this time, he adds the following appreciative testimony: 'Havell's mode of study seems to me to be dictated by sound philosophy. He looks abroad into the varied field of nature, without prevention or prejudice; his knowledge comes from the fountain head, and if he mistake or deceive himself he goes back to the same source for correction and improvement. No man is better aware than he is of the principles on which the best painters worked, but he is at every step prepared to weigh those principles in the balance of nature, and should they be found wanting, he is strong enough to reject them and throw them from him with as much ease as Samson broke the green twigs of the Philistines.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 124.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 232-236.

Uwins was right in his anticipation that Havell would be tempted to remain. On the 26th of August he writes to Severn: 'Havell is still with me, going on gloriously; he is painting a picture of the lovely Bay of Baia, which sparkles with all the gems of the East, and is as true as it is beautiful. I really consider myself happy to be working in the same room with him. To see him paint is like seeing Paganini play the fiddle; he is just beginning to relish Neapolitan scenery. We have touched him with our enchanter's wand, and I think we shall fix him here for the winter; he seems to be the only man who enters into the true poetry of the art; Turner depends too much on his gods and goddesses and his classical story, and Callcott is nothing without a low horizon and a Dutch sea-port, but Havell gives you the "call of incense-breathing morn," or shows the "glorious orb of day" leaving a world full of loveliness, and setting in a blaze of splendour. This is poetry; there is no dressing up, no canting sentiment, no forced endeavour to make nature what nature is not. The girl comes dancing through the vineyard with all the hilarity of innocence, and the vine-dresser goes through his daily work in quiet simplicity. The poets have done all this: Cowper has done it, Wordsworth has done it, and Lord Byron has done it, but amongst the painters, Havell seems to me the first that has attempted it.'<sup>1</sup> Some of the above was written in answer to Severn's advocacy of a treatment of nature on principles of 'classic' modification.

Havell, indeed, not only stayed in Italy, but his presence detained Uwins there longer than he had intended. The latter declared that the benefit he derived from Havell's experience and criticism had rendered that artist's arrival at Naples the most important event in his own professional life; and that the advantage of painting through a winter with him would be worth any sacrifice. So they took an old deserted house at Resina, at the foot of Vesuvius, over the buried ruins of Herculaneum; and there they lived together for some months, hard at work upon their respective pictures. Uwins relates how, paying rent at the rate of 4*l.* per annum, they fared luxuriously on three or four shillings a day, between them, for cook, kitchen, and washing, with enough solid food for the renewal of Havell's animal tissues. 'From the roof of the house we have every object we can wish for study. The beautiful bay with its lovely islands lies at our feet, and the whole mountain vomits fire and smoke over our heads

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 237.



If we walk out, we are in a moment amongst the most voluptuous vineyards, witnessing the labours of the peasant, and listening to his songs of gladness.'<sup>1</sup> All was not placid enjoyment, however, with poor Uwins ; as we learn from the following confession in a letter of his dated 10 February, 1829 : 'The indisposition I complained of in my last letter might be partly brought on by mental anxiety. Havell's coming here was a sore trial to me. His fierce mode of criticising was, at first, almost more than I could bear ; but I have been enabled to persevere. I knew everything he said was in kindness, and I was determined to be in his eyes as if I knew nothing, that I might learn the full result of all his practice and experience. For the time I am a great loser in pocket, inasmuch as I have begun almost over again some things that were nearly finished, but the end is most satisfactory.'<sup>2</sup> Elsewhere he writes : 'The advantage I receive from his advice and instruction abundantly compensates for any mortification his superior talents may give me,' though his 'readiness, address, and power will carry off more subjects in a month than I can in six.'<sup>3</sup> And it must have been not a little mortifying to find him entering into joint possession of artist ground which had hitherto been regarded as his friend's peculiar domain. For we read further : 'He is getting up a picture of the vintage, in which he partly anticipates me.' Uwins consoles himself with the reflection that 'there may still be room for a different mode of treatment. Two artists living together will stumble and clash sometimes. If he were to take all my subjects from me, I should not quarrel with him.'<sup>4</sup>

Havell's health appears to have been delicate at the time, for in February 1829 his friend writes that he 'has been laid up for a second time,' but 'talks of going off to Rome in a week or two.' Probably he reached home again in the following August, when Uwins, still at Naples, writes on the 13th respecting some designs he had sent over for the *Annals*. 'I hope Mr. Havell may arrive in time to touch upon the proofs, which he has kindly promised ; he must be very near your shores, if not already landed.'<sup>5</sup> There had been another annual show in the gallery at Pall Mall East, to which he had lent nothing but his name, and then he finally ceased to be a Member.

This second retirement from the Water-Colour Society was the close of Havell's career as a water-colour painter. The use of body

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 134.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 133.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 137.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 151.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 129.

colour to which his brother Members objected (faithful still to old traditions) was an indication of the change in his practice. He had fairly taken to oils, and thenceforth is to be classed among painters in that medium. He did, however, resume his yearly designing for the graver of his old friend John Pye in the *Polite Repository*. His hand and taste in composition may again be recognized in the pocket-book for 1829, the designs for which supersede those of Reinagle, with manifest advantage. It is not until 1836, however, that he begins to take subjects from foreign sources. From that year he includes Italian views, and from 1840 some from India, China, and other parts of the world. But none are to be compared in beauty with those of his native land, on the banks of the Thames, and among the castles and ruins of her northern counties and of Wales. The prints for 1844 are the last which bear his name; but before then there is a perceptible decline in the quality of the work, partly owing, perhaps, to the introduction of steel instead of copper plates. Havell became, from 1830, a contributor of oil pictures to the Royal Academy, the British Institution, and the British Artists Society, the number of such exhibited works from 1804 to 1857 being, according to Graves, 177, besides what he sent to our gallery.

Towards the end of his life, poor Havell met with divers misfortunes. His later practice in oil never won for him the position he had held in the early days of the water-colour school.<sup>1</sup> And while the income it brought was insufficient for his maintenance, the failure of an Indian bank lessened his capital in reserve. In 1853 he lost a sister, who had been his companion and housekeeper for thirteen years at 16 Bayswater Terrace; after which event he removed to High Row, Kensington, where he had a few old friends. There, however, his health declined, and death came to him on the 16th of December, 1857. The cemetery of Kensal Green contains his tomb.

To the engraved works above mentioned have to be added: in Cooke's *Thames*, 'Cliefden,' and 'Sandycombe Lodge, Twickenham, Villa of J. M. W. Turner, Esq., R.A.,' both dated 1 Jan. 1829; and in the *Gallery of Modern British Artists*, 2 vols. 4to, 1834, 'Tivoli' and 'Sorrento.'

<sup>1</sup> Uwins writes to Severn on 24 May, 1838: 'Our friend Havell . . . goes on selling his pictures at country exhibitions, at five, ten, and fifteen guineas apiece. His principle is to meet and not attempt to force the market.' (*Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 276.)

Except that he married in 1824, there is no change to record in the even career of WILLIAM TURNER during the period of Cristall's presidency. As before and after, he lived at Oxford,<sup>1</sup> engaged in teaching, and exhibited yearly an average of four or five views in England and Wales, which, however careful and true to nature, were not generally attractive. Pyne, indeed, commends a cornfield of his in 1822, as 'one of the finest in the room,' although 'without the least effort to make it pictorial.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From 1825, his Oxford address is 'London Place, St. Clement's,' instead of 'at Mr. Betts's, St. Giles's,' as theretofore.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 143.



## CHAPTER III

## SCHOLARS OF THE OLD SCHOOL

Biographies continued—*De Wint*—*Copley Fielding*—*Cox*—*Robson* (to his death)—*William Hunt*—*Scott*—*William Walker*.

THE year 1825 brought back to the gallery PETER DE WINT, too long an absentee. He had not exhibited with the Society since 1818. After the reorganization of 1821, he was formally invited to resume, without passing again through the degree of Associate, his Membership, lost under the irruption of oil painters in 1812. But he then declined, 'for the present,' as he cautiously expressed it. A few years' reflection induced him to accept the offer, and thenceforth he became a representative man at the annual show. In the interval his name appears twice in the Royal Academy Catalogues, with a 'View of a Water-mill in Derbyshire' in 1819, and one of 'Bolton Castle, Yorkshire,' in 1820.

These do not represent all the intervening produce of his pencil. He was at this time much engaged in work for the press. His contributions to Cooke's *Thames* have already been mentioned; and he was now employed in fashioning travellers' sketches into designs fit for the graver. Thus from sketches taken in Sicily by Major William Light (an officer who had been on Wellington's staff in the Peninsula) he made a series of sixty-two drawings, which were reproduced by the best line engravers of the day, and published (by Rodwell & Martin) in a quarto volume in 1823, entitled *Sicilian Scenery*. The dates on the plates begin with 1 Jan. 1821. Many of them are beautiful and effective compositions, and very luminous in quality. He also did the like with the Greek sketches of Thomas Allason, architect, putting them into pictorial shape for engravers of the same group (G. and W. Cooke, J. Pye, G. Hollis, and E. Finden) of a larger set of plates in John Spencer Stanhope's '*Olympia*;' or Topography illustrative of the actual state of the plain of Olympia, and

the ruins of the city of Elis'—folio, 1824. (Rodwell & Martin.) And a third book, '*Views in the South of France*, chiefly on the Rhone,' published in 1825, contains twenty-four plates engraved by W. B. Cooke, George Cooke, and J. C. Allen, from drawings by De Wint after the sketches of John Hughes, A.M., of Oriel College, Oxford.

In the first year, 1825, of his renewed Membership, De Wint brought nine drawings to the gallery. Three of these were from the Lake District, and three from Glamorganshire, where he had been in the preceding year. A priced catalogue shows amounts varying from fifteen to sixty guineas for two-thirds of the number. In 1826 he has one drawing only, a 'View of Lancaster,' but after that he sends a steady average of fourteen for the next five years. In the *Literary Souvenir* for 1826 is 'Windsor Castle,' engraved after De Wint by C. Heath.

In 1827 the establishment in Percy Street, where the De Wints had lived since 1810, was broken up. In that year Hilton was appointed Keeper of the Royal Academy and had to reside at Somerset House; and in the next year he married.<sup>1</sup> De Wint thereupon migrated to 40 Upper Gower Street, where his name, engraven on a small brass door plate,<sup>2</sup> remained till after his death in 1849. The house is on the west side, and now called 113 Gower Street. At this time, if not before, De Wint's terms for tuition were as high as Varley's, namely a guinea an hour.

The year 1828 was a remarkable one in his life, being the only time when he visited the Continent. It was but a short tour in Normandy which he made with his wife. As he was disappointed in the scenery and she could ill bear the fatigue, he never repeated the experiment. The artistic result was shown in a few views of Rouen, Caen, Fécamp, &c., in 1829 and 1830. Instead of going abroad again, he paid a first visit to North Wales, where the impression he received was of the opposite kind; for the country much

<sup>1</sup> The Messrs. Redgrave make sad confusion of the connexion between the brother painters. In the article on 'Hilton, R.A.' in the *Dictionary*, he is stated to have 'married the sister of his friend and pupil (*sic*), Peter DeWint.' And in the *Century of Painters*, ii. 495; Miss Hilton, whom De Wint married, is called 'the daughter of a clergyman.' These errors are corrected and partly explained by Mr. Armstrong, who tells us that there was no double connexion, and that it was Hilton who married the daughter of a clergyman. See *Memoir of De Wint*, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Such indications were employed more commonly then than they are now, in London, in other professions besides the medical. On the opposite side of the way was a similar plate which marked the residence of Harley the actor.

surpassed his expectations. Subjects thence begin in 1831, and are afterwards not unfrequent in his lists. His eighty drawings from 1825 to 1831 include also views in various parts of England and South Wales, two of Lancaster, and three of Lincoln, and some eight or ten of various castles. Of his specially characteristic subjects we have a few windmills, and about a dozen corn and hay fields. For these representations of harvest scenes he had already acquired a great reputation. It is related that, some years before, a 'cornfield' by him, still unfinished on his easel, had so impressed a certain brother artist that he urged the well-known collector, Mr. Wheeler of the New Road, to go and buy it at once, as it was 'an imperial drawing,' and that that gentleman did so accordingly for 100 guineas.<sup>1</sup> Thackeray declared that 'Fuseli, who wanted his umbrella to look at Constable's showers, might have called for a pot of porter at seeing one of De Wint's hay-makings.'<sup>2</sup>

From the date of De Wint's return, the marked prominence of three or four names was such as to stamp them as a symbol of recognition of a special period in the water-colour school. We speak of its golden age as that of De Wint and Cox and Copley Fielding. The name of Robson should be added to these; for, though less in our mouths now, it held rank in his own time with those of the more familiar trio. The most memorable features of this series of exhibitions were undoubtedly the landscapes of that distinguished group of painters. Theirs were the works of the day, theirs the latest novelties of the season; while the drawings of Varley, Barret, and Cristall, how highly soever they were still appreciated by connoisseurs, were survivals of an earlier generation. There is not one, however, in either group who links the ages together by the nature and quality of his art, more firmly than Peter De Wint. Scarcely older in years than Cox or Fielding, and like them in some degree the artistic offspring of Varley, he seems to belong to antecedent parentage, and more than any painter of his time to wield his brush as if inspired directly by Girtin.

The number of works exhibited by COPLEY FIELDING during this period is quite extraordinary. Were it not for the evidence of the catalogues, one would scarcely believe that from 1821 to 1831 he

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 143.

<sup>2</sup> *Marvy's English Landscape Painters*.



had in the gallery about 522 drawings,<sup>1</sup> making an average of more than forty-seven per annum. The maritime and sea subjects now form a considerable proportion of the whole; and, besides stock mountain views in Scotland, Cumberland, and Wales, a few studies on the South Downs begin to take their place, foreshadowing a type of 'Copley-Fieldings' very popular in the artist's latest time. A contemporary critique in 1827 seems to indicate that both the merits and defects of his sea-painting were by that time fully developed. Exception had been taken to the blackness of his waves in one view (of the Eddystone), and his sea is considered too blue in another (of Portsmouth), while a drawing of 'Vessels at Spithead' is declared to be 'of the very highest order for clearness and vividness of tint, and the most brilliant transparency of tone.'<sup>2</sup>

Fielding's services to the Society, as we have already seen, were by no means confined to that of contributing so well and so largely to the exhibitions. He continued to perform the duties of its Secretary from 1821 to 1826, but had to decline re-election at that year's Anniversary Meeting on November the 30th by reason of press of professional work. In the following February a testimonial was voted to him in the shape of a silver waiter, of the value of twenty-five guineas. He still retained the office, conferred upon him in 1823, of Deputy President, during Cristall's residence in the country.

Fielding also painted in oils; and so well that he obtained a medal at the Paris Salon in the same year, 1824, with Constable and Bonington.

DAVID COX, from the time when he saw the Society fairly settled in permanent quarters, became a steady annual contributor to the gallery, sending an average of about twenty-eight drawings, making a total of 266 during Cristall's presidency. Although his home remained at Hereford for the first six of these eleven years, his subjects from that neighbourhood bear but a small proportion to the whole; the largest class being taken from the home counties and their southern coast, but more especially on the Thames from

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes (as before) from two to four are included under one number in the catalogue.

<sup>2</sup> *Repository of Arts*, third series, ix. 357. One of these may have been the beautiful drawing bearing the above date exhibited by Messrs. Vokins in 1886, as 'Off Portsmouth,' from the collection of Mrs. Courtney.

Battersea to the sea. With these are a considerable number of views in North Wales, and a few of Bolton Abbey, Kenilworth, &c., and Lynmouth in Devon.

In 1823 his 'Embarkation of King George IV. at Greenwich' attracted special admiration. It was the large and beautiful drawing gay with colour and the fluttering of flags, formerly in the collection of the late Mr. John Allnutt, and now, it is believed, in the possession of his son-in-law, Lord Brassey. Among the general subjects we count ten harvest scenes, and occasionally the artist lets his fancy loose, as in a composition of 'Carthage,' with Aeneas and Achates<sup>1</sup> (1825), in three scenes with pirates (1826), and brigands (1828, 1831), and in drawings with the Claude-like titles 'Debarcation' (1827) and 'A Marine Palace' (1828). But such subjects belong more properly to the classic period of studentship when he copied Poussin, from which he had now emerged. His practice had passed into what his biographer, Mr. Solly, describes as his second manner, pursued from 1814 to 1829, chiefly during his residence at Hereford; when he had become less conventional than before, his colouring brighter, and his finish more telling, though not more elaborate.<sup>2</sup> 'I have seen a good many drawings,' says that writer, 'principally small ones, of the dates between 1820 and 1826, in which there is a good deal of delicate finish, but often the foliage is rather stiff and constrained, and the high lights on the trees are occasionally touched in with body colour: this method Cox discarded in after years—the lights, if not left, being taken out with brush or handkerchief. The figures also are brighter in the colours of their dress, have less depth of shadow, and are deficient in the movement and action of his more mature works.'<sup>3</sup> Although Cox had put by money enough to build himself a house at Hereford in 1824, he sold it three years afterwards, and came back to London, partly on his son's account, who was growing up, and partly to have more intercourse with artists and lovers of art. In 1827 he once more took up his residence in Southwark, where he resided, at No. 9 Foxley Road, Kennington Common, for the next fourteen years. In the previous year he had made a first trip to the Continent, and done some sketches in Holland; though no immediate fruit appeared in the Society's gallery. Mr. Solly tells us that these sketches were

<sup>1</sup> A work unusually bright in colour, sold for fifty guineas, and afterwards in the Quilter Collection.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Cox*, p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 93, 94.

chiefly in pencil, jottings made as the artist 'glided along canals,' the colours being sometimes noted in writing. 'Low horizons, figures and cattle cleverly introduced, like Cuyp—clouds in outline, slight but graphic.'<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 1829 he went abroad again, with more conspicuous results, there being no less than twenty-three foreign subjects among his contributions to the gallery in 1829-31. Sixteen of these are views on the north coast of France and in Belgium, beginning with 'Fruit and Flower Market at Brussels,' 'Calais Pier,' and 'Calais Harbour,' 'Fish Market, Boulogne,' &c. in 1829; and seven are from Paris, in 1830-31.

Cox took his son David with him to Paris. There they chanced to meet his old fellow-townsmen John Pye, who was at that time engaged in retouching the plates of the *Musée Français*, for a reissue of that series of engravings. Their adventures, as related by Pye, are set down in the following words by Mr. Jenkins. When Pye encountered him, 'Cox was having his boots brushed by one of the shoeblack boys in the gardens of the Tuileries. The meeting was very agreeable to both. Mr. Pye, being well acquainted with Paris, offered to take Cox to see various places of interest; amongst others, he proposed to show him the interior of a gaming house. Cox at first objected, but being told he ought to see everything, particularly the characters who frequented such places, he consented. In the evening they joined the throng round the gaming tables; but Cox on his return, descending the stairs, slipped and fell, spraining his foot and ankle so badly that he was confined to his room in Paris for three weeks. The moral reflections Cox made upon his meeting with the accident at such a place, Mr. Pye remarked, were very curious. From the simple character of Cox, we may safely surmise the nature of his reflections.'<sup>2</sup> When a little better he followed poor Girtin's precedent, of nearly thirty years before, and did his sketching in a cab. A more amusing glimpse of 'farmer' Cox in Paris comes from his own lips, on the authority of the late James Holland. 'Cox when in Paris was delighted that by the aid of his pencil he could make himself understood. If he desired an egg, he drew one; and in order to make a waiter understand that he wanted it cooked for eating, he represented the shell broken, and put a touch of yellow colour on the top to indicate the yolk. "Bien, Monsieur!" exclaimed the amused garçon; and soon a boiled egg appeared'<sup>2</sup>—a veritable

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Cox*, p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



*œuf*—à la Cox. The curious reader may refer to Mr. Hall's book<sup>1</sup> for a further account of our artist's Paris feeding, and how he was *désillusionné* on the subject of *tête de veau*.

During this period David Cox continued the issue of his practical works for students. With the date 1823, and the before-mentioned publisher, Clay,<sup>2</sup> we find what purports to be the 'fifth edition' of '*A Series of Progressive Lessons*,' &c. (with the words 'and Drawing with Pencil' added to 'Landscape Painting in Water-Colours'). But the graphic illustrations are all new, being divided into three classes, to serve as models for sketching in pencil, shading with Indian ink or sepia, and colouring with water-colours, respectively. The first contains three or four simple examples 'on stone by D. Cox, published May 1823.' The plates which follow are engraved in aquatint after him by G. Hunt, and the subjects 'increase progressively in force and colour and in intricacy.' The following list of pigments recommended for the student's use may afford an indication of the master's own practice. They are 'Gamboge, Light Ochre, Light Red, Lake, Vermilion, Burnt Sienna, Vandyke Brown, Prussian Blue, Indigo, Black, and Sepia.' Two years later, another work of the same kind is added to the list. It bears the following title: '*The Young Artist's Companion*, or Drawing-Book of Studies and Landscape Embellishments; comprising a great variety of the most picturesque objects required in the various compositions of landscape scenery, arranged in progressive lessons. By David Cox.' Published by S. and J. Fuller, obl. 4to, 1825. This volume contains full letterpress in the nature of a treatise, forty soft-ground etchings in a series ascending from elementary studies of objects and parts, up to a complete landscape, twelve aquatints in imitation of sepia similarly arranged, and twelve fully coloured, with deep rich tones as models for water-colour painting; besides a coloured frontispiece representing a group of framed and other drawings in the studio. Dates on the plates extend from 1819 to 1823.

The methods of engraving generally employed by Cox and his contemporaries in the production of works of this class were soon to be superseded by lithography. But Cox did not, like Prout and Harding, make drawing copies on stone. The few very elementary

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of Cox*, pp. 48, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Clay, of Ludgate Hill, dealt in Cox's drawings, and Palser also, who had now removed to the Strand. See Solly's *Life of Cox*, p. 66 (dates 1825, 1829).

ones in his students' books are exceptions, and there is but one known lithographic view drawn by him, namely that of the 'County Hall, Hereford,' published there in 1830. He is said to have tried litho-tint, and given it up. He furnished a few designs, however, for the line engravers. In 1829 was published by Messrs. Knott, of Birmingham, a work on his native county, entitled *Warwickshire Illustrated*, for which Cox drew some of William Radclyffe's plates. The original drawings in sepia belong to the Birmingham and Midland Institute. This was, it is believed, followed by 'Eight Views engraved in line of *Dudley Castle and its Vicinity*,' from drawings by D. Cox, J. R. Walker, &c. Published by Radclyffe & Co., Birmingham. These prints, measuring about  $5\frac{1}{4} \times 9$  inches, were issued in a portfolio. One by Cox, of 'Cavern at the Wren's Nest,' is dated 1829. Other plates bear date 25 March, 1831.

The devoted energy with which G. F. ROBSON had applied himself to the furtherance of the Society's interests, from the time of its resuscitation, how hard he had worked to fill the gallery, and how instrumental he had been in obtaining permanent and suitable quarters, have already been related. After the establishment of the exhibitions on their new footing, his industry did not slacken. As a furnisher of the annual show he became more prolific than ever, his quota of drawings being surpassed by no one except Copley Fielding. In the course of thirteen years he exhibited 484 works, his average rising to nearly fifty per annum in the last four years of Cristall's reign. A careful analysis of the list of subjects from 1821 to 1833 shows that 187 are views in Scotland (including very many from his old ground among the Grampians and the Perthshire Highlands, some about the falls of the Clyde, and, in and after 1826, a few from Skye); eighty-nine in Durham and adjoining counties (chiefly views of his native city) and at the English Lakes, and fifty-six in Wales. These are distributed over the whole period, except the Lake views, more than forty in number, which begin in 1828. At or before that time he must also have visited Ireland, for from the same date he has almost annually some views at the Lakes of Killarney, amounting in all to nearly as many. In 1821-22 there are eight views at Hastings, and in the next three years more than twenty from the Isle of Wight. Upwards of thirty views are from other parts of England, including six from Berkshire (1822-5) and eleven from Somerset (1829, 1833), mostly

of the Cheddar cliffs; and about a dozen are landscape studies of no specific locality. In his latest years he sometimes worked in collaboration with Hills. Between 1829 and 1833 their joint names appear in connexion with seven drawings, in some of which Hills is employed to stock Robson's forests with deer, or drive cattle to his lake sides, in others the latter supplies landscape backgrounds to the animal portraits of the former. In but five titles do we find an ostensible exercise of the fancy, and all these are in illustration of Shakspeare. Two are 'Timon of Athens,' and two from 'Cymbeline;' while one depicts the 'lured traveller' who 'spurs apace to gain the timely inn.' But Robson's landscapes were generally treated in a subjective manner, their 'depth of repose' being as much extolled by admirers as their 'largeness and illusive reality,' their 'natural gradations' and their 'luminous skies.' A drawing called 'Solitude—on the Banks of Loch Avon,' in 1823, excited special admiration; and a twilight view of the Thames from Westminster Bridge in 1832 was reckoned one of the finest and most poetic of his works.

Besides the above groups there was an important contingent of comprehensive views of towns and cathedral cities, numbering more than thirty in all exclusive of the many of Durham. Sixteen of such views, exhibited in 1826–28, are expressly stated to have been executed for engraving in a work entitled *Picturesque Views of the Cities of England*. This was a quarto volume edited and published in 1828 by John Britton, the literary antiquary, and employer of so many of our water-colour artists.<sup>1</sup> It contains thirty-two beautiful plates by some of the leading line engravers, after Robson's drawings. These prints alone would suffice to give our artist very high rank as a landscape designer. It is difficult to praise too highly the broad luminous quality of their chiaroscuro, or the effective, appropriate, and well-varied treatment of the subjects. It is true, perhaps, that these merits shine forth with special advantage under translation in this style of engraving. Robson's paintings are apt to suffer from a certain want of textural variety. Here, however, if this be felt as a defect, we readily excuse it as generally incidental to the method of reproduction, instead of ascribing it to the individual designer. The smooth uniformity above referred to of Robson's rendering of the face of nature is less in accord with modern taste than it was with that of

<sup>1</sup> This work was originally issued without letterpress, in order to avoid the tax of eleven copies for the public libraries. See Ackermann's *Repository*, third series, viii. 365 (1826).



the critics of his own day ; and the perception of it may somewhat blind us now to his high merit as an artist. By students, however, of the old school, it may still be admitted that, while in the works of De Wint we see reflected one side of Girtin's art, another found its correlative in those of Robson. For an earlier prototype, with whom a sympathy is more perceptible in the latter, one may revert to the solemnity and repose that pervade the simple drawings of John Cozens.

While Robson was thus busily employed with his own pencil, he was also restlessly active in the interests of his profession. His first attempt to combine the works of two brother artists had, as we have seen, been productive of results not altogether harmonious. His own collaboration with Hills was more happy. But a greater success attended his efforts, not to put joint work into one picture, but to form a representative album of drawings by the best water-colour painters of the day. This task was undertaken for a liberal patroness of the art, Mrs. G. Haldimand. When complete (in 1828) the collection amounted to 100 drawings, and filled three volumes. It was commenced in 1826, and in the following year twenty-seven of the drawings were placed upon a screen in the Society's gallery, and formed part of the exhibition of 1827. These were 'all framed alike in rich frost work,' which Alfred Chalon described as 'offering in profile the appearance of an immense mass of gilt gingerbread.'<sup>1</sup> Uwins, when in Naples, gives an account of Robson's persevering endeavours in 1827 and 1828, backed up in the latter year by Callcott, to get a drawing from him, after he had given up water-colours.<sup>2</sup> The collection was sold in one lot, at Christie's, in June 1861, after Mrs. Haldimand's death, and bought by Messrs. Agnew for 1,500*l*. In the summer of 1883 the 100 drawings with the illuminated titles were placed on view in Messrs. Vokins's gallery in Great Portland Street, where they formed an interesting illustration of the condition of water-colour art during the period which we are now considering.

Robson's anxiety to make Mrs. Haldimand's representative album as complete as possible accords with an anecdote, related to Mr. Jenkins by Copley Fielding, respecting another collection of the same kind. This was a book filled with small drawings by artist friends

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 184.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 48, 49, 57, 71, 101. He eventually did a drawing entitled, 'Going to School.'

which had been got together by one Mrs. Vine, the wife, it is presumed, of the Mr. Vine before mentioned as a patron of the water-colour men, and of Cristall in particular. Fielding, who appears to have been asked to contribute, having but little time to spare, contented himself with sending her a sketch in pencil instead of a water-colour drawing. Robson, who could not bear to see a generous act half done, got hold of the book and cut out the sketch, telling Fielding afterwards, by way of apology, that he had committed this act of mutilation to prevent anyone from following the bad example of making drawings for Mrs. Vine in pencil only.

It need scarcely be said, after the instances given, that Robson, just and generous as he was, and noted for his high integrity, was at the same time a clever man of business. 'He regularly exhibited his drawings in his private rooms before they were sent to the gallery; and when he sold a drawing to a visitor he put a blue ticket in the corner of the frame with the word "Sold" upon it, just as is the custom at the public exhibition. A gentleman had for years regularly presented himself at Robson's "private view," and was as regularly enraptured with a drawing that was "sold," ever repeating, 'Dear me, how unfortunate I am! every drawing I prefer has always that little provoking blue ticket in the corner.' Robson, seeing through the excuse, determined to play off a joke upon him; and when the time came with the usual exclamation and excuse, replied, "I was quite sure you would prefer that drawing to any of the others, so I put the 'Sold' ticket on it to secure it for you—the *drawing is yours*." The gentleman took his leave and was never seen again.'<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, the absence of an undue desire to push his own way in the world is evinced by the fact related by Mr. Solly,<sup>2</sup> that he suggested to one of his pupils, Mr. W. S. Ellis, the advisability of taking some lessons from Cox, whose drawings Mr. Ellis had seen and admired.

Robson was an honorary member of the 'Sketching Society,' but never contributed to its portfolios, as a weakness of sight prevented him from drawing at its evening meetings. He was, however, a constant attendant at them, and took a lively interest in the works of the sketchers. The kind of critical supervision he thus appeared to exercise led to a curious mistake, as to the nature of his position and

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* J. Lewis. A similar story is told of De Wint by Mr. Armstrong in his *Memoir* of that painter.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of David Cox*, pp. 66, 67.

functions, which was made by a Swiss servant, probably of the Chalons', who once announced him as '*Monsieur l'Inspecteur*.' Of course he was thenceforth known in the society as 'Inspector Robson.'<sup>1</sup>

A much longer record of work done would have testified to the industry of George Robson, had not a melancholy accident cut short the career of this able and refined artist, and at the same time deprived the world of a most kind and good man, universally esteemed and beloved. In the summer of 1833 he went to Jersey with his friend Hills. He was in London, and presiding over a meeting of the Sketching Society at his house, No. 17 Golden Square, on Thursday, the 22nd of August, held to bid a loving farewell to C. R. Leslie, R.A., on his departure for America. On the following Wednesday—(the account here given of what happened is in the words of Uwins)—he 'embarked in good health and spirits on board the *James Watt* steamboat, with the intention of visiting his friends in the North. He was landed at Stockton-upon-Tees on the 31st, with his stomach much inflamed in consequence of some deleterious matter contained in the food of which he had partaken in his passage. The best medical advice was procured, but it was found impossible to arrest the progress of the inflammation. He died on the 8th of September, 1833, in the forty-fifth year of his age. The last words he said, indeed the only words he was able to articulate after his brother's arrival from Durham, were, "I am poisoned." Seven of the passengers in the steamboat were affected more or less in the same way.'<sup>2</sup> 'In Robson,' continues the narrator, 'the Society has lost a valued friend and associate, whose cheerful countenance gave an interest to the meetings that will never be forgotten.' He was buried in the churchyard of St. Mary-le-Bow, in his native city of Durham.

The following landscapes by Robson have been engraved, besides those already mentioned: In Tillotson's *Album of Scottish Scenery*, 'Ben Venue' (engraved by A. W. Graham), 'Loch Ard,' 'Stirling Castle,' 'Durham,' and 'Inch Cailleach' (E. Finden); *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, 1833, 'Llyn Idwal' (W. R. Smith, B. F. Gibbon, and E. Webb), 'Red Deer in the Pass of Glencoe,' the deer by Hills; Finden's *Illustrations of Byron*, 3 vols. 4to, 1833-34, 'Lachin-y-Gair' (in vol. 1); and Lawson's *Scotland Delineated*, litho-

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 192-3.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 194.



graphs, 'Glenfalloch' (W. Giles), 'Loch Achray' (J. Graf), and 'Stirling Castle' (Gauci).

The following of his drawings are recorded as having realized more than 200*l.* in public sales: 'Durham, Evening,' 283*l.* 10*s.* in the 'J. Allnutt' sale, 1886; 'View of St. Paul's' ( $23\frac{1}{2} \times 32\frac{1}{2}$  in.), 252*l.*, and 'View of Ely' ( $29 \times 48$  in.), 241*l.* 10*s.*, in 'W. Leaff exōrs.' sale, 1875.

To Robson's spirit of perseverance, conveyed in a timely word of advice to a timid aspirant, the Society was indebted for another of its most distinguished Members; for it was thus that WILLIAM HENRY HUNT, who had been rejected as a candidate in 1823, was induced to try again in the following year, with a happier result. Hunt was elected an Associate Exhibitor on the 9th of April, 1824. Up to that time he had been little known to the public; though he had enjoyed the patronage of a few discerning connoisseurs, and Varley, his master, is said to have appreciated from the first his wonderfully delicate eye for colour.<sup>1</sup>

In 1822, after an interval of ten years, we again find the name of William Hunt in the Royal Academy catalogue, with three exhibits, and the address, 36 Brownlow Street, Drury Lane, again in his native quarter. One is a sketch of the porch of St. Martin's Church, another of the dining-room at Cassiobury, and the third with four more in the three succeeding years being 'sketches' or 'studies from nature.' He sends nothing after 1825, having then been admitted to the Water-Colour Society. From that time he devoted himself exclusively to water-colours.

Hitherto he had exhibited landscapes chiefly. It was as a painter of rustic figures that he made his *début* in Pall Mall East. A study of a 'Gamekeeper,' in the service of his patron, the Earl of Essex, one of two drawings which he sent to the gallery in 1824, was pronounced to be 'a very original and masterly example of richness and effect.'<sup>2</sup> His next year's drawings comprised two more gamekeepers, a poacher, and a gardener, with about half a dozen studies of game; and for another season he repeated the same classes of subjects, probably for the most part in drawings made at Cassiobury. These sufficed to raise him to full Membership, which rank was conferred

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* Samuel Palmer.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 46. Probably it was the drawing engraved, with date 1831, in the *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, 1833.

upon him on the 5th of June, 1826. He was thereby entitled to show a larger number of works in 1827. These included studies of flowers, fruit and vegetables, and one drawing in particular which established his reputation. It represented a common 'Paper Lanthorn' attached to a 'green' stall, with the light of a candle shining through. In the luminous quality with which he had endowed this simple subject, his marvellous command of colour and gradations of tone were immediately recognized. The unique character of his genius once perceived, he thenceforth met with steady encouragement, which continued ever after to increase. His drawings exhibited from 1824 to 1831 number 153 in all, and their titles embrace examples of nearly the whole range of subjects to which his *œuvre* was limited. Eight of them contain candle-light effects of the nature of that which was so successful. About sixty are figure studies, mostly of the picturesque kind, many in the last three years being of fisher folk, smugglers, and the like, doubtless made at Hastings. 'It is said that for thirty years Hunt visited Hastings regularly. He put up at a small house in the old town, looking on to the fishing boats and the busy scene of fisher life that passed before his window. On the occasion of a great storm he sat up two whole nights watching the effect of the wrecks along the coast, "to carry away the impression."' <sup>1</sup> Now and then a name such as 'Prayer,' 'Meditation,' or a 'Weary Traveller,' points to the vein of serious pathos which was among the higher attributes of Hunt's art.

It was not until the beginning of the next period that the humorous element became conspicuous in his celebrated boy studies, or until later still that the demand for fruit pieces and works of minute detail absorbed his precious time and left him none for nobler efforts; and when, moreover, he changed the character of his technique. Among this earlier group, indeed, are eighteen studies of fruit and flowers, and in the last two years he begins to paint his favourite birds' nests. But we may fairly consider the whole group as belonging to the artist's earlier manner, at least during that more advanced stage of it when they were not only stamped with his individual feeling, but also displayed the originality of his method of working. About twenty are interiors, some of cowsheds, smithies, and the like, one on a ship's lower decks; others of state rooms at

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J.

Hardwick Hall. A like number are merely called 'studies (or sketches) from nature.'

In his first practice William Hunt followed the tinted method of the ancestral school; and he would sometimes use the reed pen freely in the delineation of buildings. But he had fairly reached the stage of *painting* when he joined the Society. What he then showed, however, still come under the category of 'early drawings,' which, as Ruskin says, depend 'for their peculiar charm on the most open and simple management of transparent colour.'<sup>1</sup> But a great deal of the appearance of solidity and the varied texture of surfaces is due to the use he made of paper as well as pigment. The skilful way in which he employed the penknife in scratching up points and lines and patches of light, either to be left untouched or afterwards modified or dotted with colour, would have entitled him to be regarded as the inventor of a *style*, had not his aims in art been of an order scarcely admitting of the application of that much-abused term. What his method was may be best understood from the answer he himself gave to an 'interviewer' in later life. Here is the story in the words of Mr. Jenkins, who received it, with an assurance of its correctness, from the late Samuel Palmer: 'A lady of very superior taste and acquirement, who painted fruit subjects, was anxious to be introduced to Hunt, not doubting that he would communicate some important principle or scientific information as to process, conduct of a picture, or the like. To her astonishment, Hunt told her that he did not know about anything of that kind. "The only thing you can do is to *fudge it out*." She then asked him if he knew Mr. —— (an artist). "To be sure I do. Of course I do. Well; he has fudged it out. We must all fudge it out. There is no other way than fudging it out." That Hunt was unable,' adds Mr. Jenkins, 'to explain to others his manner of working, the above anecdote indicates. In his own words, he was always trying to carry everything he attempted further and further, never quite satisfied with what he did; which may possibly be the hidden secret of his excellence.'<sup>2</sup>

While in technical perfection the works of Hunt have never been surpassed, no one, in fact, was ever less a slave to artifice. If he did not seek for beautiful combinations of line and form as primary objects, his innate good taste saved him from unpictorial discords. The qualities in nature that charmed his eye, the scintillation of light on

<sup>1</sup> *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MS.



varied surfaces, and the infinite reflections and interlacings of colour, all in harmonious allegiance to one vivid source of luminous inspiration—these were what he sought to portray. And these he found, glorifying the common objects about him, instead of having to be sought for in costly treasures and rare exotics, or by travel which he could not perform. To register what he thus saw and loved to see, he used the simplest means at hand, varying his materials and processes, according to his mind, in each minute particular. Thus in the same drawing we may find in one part the most delicate stippling of flesh, in another a coarse hatching of tint over tint; and in a third the surface of the paper chopped and sliced and scratched with a knife. No process is either concealed or obtrusively employed. They all combine to yield a unity of effect, the charm whereof is such that one is little tempted to analyze the means.

There has already been quoted some advice given by William Hunt, when an old man, to a young student. A few more extracts from letters written in 1862 and 1863 with the same object may properly be inserted here, as illustrating his own aims and habits of thought when himself a rising artist. 'Friend Brown,' he wrote, '... I am glad to hear your son has sold a drawing at the exhibition. It will stimulate him to fag. But he must bear in mind there is something more to accomplish than he will ever do. As soon as he thinks he has become perfect he is *done for*. I should advise him to *see* all he can in the way of art, and to *draw* as much as he can from *nature*; and be very particular *not to copy any one's manner*.'—'Never mind what others do; paint as *you* see nature, and try to get all other persons' ways of doing it out of your head.' Again: 'I have to congratulate you upon the success of your son gaining a medal for painting. He called on Saturday and played a game of draughts with me. I gave him all the good advice I could, such as "not to think anything of gaining a medal except that it gave one a great lift in the estimation of the public, but to *paint away for the pure love of the art*.'" Again: 'He is laying a good foundation by his severe study of the figure as a means of teaching him to see and draw correctly—colour—and light and dark. He must get a *taste* and *knowledge* by looking at *nature* as well as looking at fine pictures.'... 'I hope he will do as much as possible *from nature*, and by that means he may stand a chance of striking out something *original*. I dare say *something* may still be left for us to do, that has

*not yet* been done *in the way of originality.*' . . . 'He must have a *greater love for his art than for anything else*, and try to screw himself up to doing *whatever he does better than any one else who has done the same sort of thing.* . . . *But do not copy any one*, then I should think he would yet do something original, which will be sure to succeed with the public. The way I suppose to do all this will be to *paint nature with your own eyes and feeling.*' 'You say,' he writes later on, 'you cannot get him to talk. Do you mean he does not *rave* about the beauties he sees in nature when you are out among what is good and picturesque? *He ought to do so.*' . . . 'If he loves art for its own sake he will *do*, and let him try with all his might to see and perceive what is beautiful in form and colour.'<sup>1</sup>

Two more exhibitors at Spring Gardens have still to be recognized as having remained with the Society after its reform. These are WILLIAM SCOTT and WILLIAM WALKER. There is no further information about either beyond what appears by the catalogues. Neither ever rose above the rank of Associate, though both contributed to the gallery for many successive years. *Scott's* subjects from 1821 to 1831 are nearly all from the North of France and the southern home counties of England, with one or two from Edinburgh; and they number forty-nine in all. *Walker's* are twenty-three, chiefly from Greece. In 1824 he sends an illustration of *Rasselas*, representing the prince's view of the Nile with joyful anticipations of travel. The rest are landscapes and studies of figures.

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

## CHAPTER IV

## PROUT; AND THE ARCHITECTS

Biography of *Prout* continued (1819 to 1831)—Henry Edridge—Further biographies—*Pugin* (1821 to death)—*Wild* (1821 to death)—*F. Nash* (1821 to 1831)—*C. Moore*—*Essex*—*Cattermole* (to 1831)—*Cotman* (to 1831).

THE career of SAMUEL PROUT has already been traced to the year 1819, when he was elected a Member of the Oil and Water Colour Society; and that has been marked as the epoch when the first period of his art came to an end, and he embarked on the as yet untravelled sea of his future fame. Redgrave places Prout's first visit to France in 1818; but according to his son's chronology,<sup>1</sup> that notable event in our history did not occur until 1819. That the latter is the true date may, indeed, be inferred from the fact that no foreign subject appears in the catalogue under Prout's name before 1820. The change wrought by this first trip abroad has been eloquently described by Ruskin. It was undertaken for the benefit of his apparently declining health. He went by Havre to Rouen, and there 'found himself for the first time in the grotesque labyrinths of the Norman streets.' 'There are few minds,' says that writer, 'so apathetic as to receive no impulse of new delight from their first acquaintance with continental scenery and architecture; and Rouen was of all the cities of France the richest in those objects with which the painter's mind had the profoundest sympathy. It was other than it is now; revolutionary fury had, indeed, spent itself upon many of its noblest monuments, but the interference of modern restoration or improvement was unknown. . . . All was at unity with itself, and the city lay under its guarding hills, one labyrinth of delight. . . . The painter's vocation was fixed from that hour. The first effect upon his mind was irrepressible enthusiasm, with a strong feeling of a new-born attachment to Art, in a new world of exceeding interest. Previous impressions were presently obliterated, and the

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



old embankments of fancy gave way to the force of overwhelming anticipations, forming another and a wider channel for its future course. From this time excursions were continually made to the continent, and every corner of France, Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy ransacked for its fragments of carved stone.<sup>1</sup> It seems nevertheless, to have taken a few years to dis sever the old associations and assimilate his practice to the requirements of this extended range of subjects. The group of Normandy sketches which he exhibited in the last season at Spring Gardens appear to have belonged as much to the general class of landscape views as to his peculiar domain of picturesque architecture. And they were accompanied by a nearly equal number of his familiar coast scenes in England, with their Hastings fishing boats, Plymouth wreckers, and the oft-repeated 'Indiaman ashore.' The old inspiration of the *Dutton* wreck was still strong enough to furnish material for one or two drawings annually. At the Egyptian Hall in 1821, the first exhibition of the new series, Prout had a small picture of 'A Man-of-War ashore,' and the critics thereof commend his expression of the 'overwhelming force of the storm,' the 'appalling bustle of the scene,' the 'magnitude and helpless state of the vessel,' his delineation of the 'anxious groups of spectators on the rocks with the boats going off to assist,' and his careful attention to finishing, without being obtrusive.<sup>2</sup>

'An Indiaman dismasted,' No. 207 in the exhibition of 1824, seems to have well nigh turned the head of our friend the 'drysalter,' who sees 'in this picture, as in the writings of Shakspeare, an extent of perception and an original faculty for representation which must be the gift of heaven to the few, to enlighten the many who would never advance science or find out anything new.'<sup>3</sup>

The praise accorded to his 'French scenery' shown in 1821, while recognition is made of the 'extraordinary ease, knowledge, and effect' with which his 'market-places, &c., with numerous groups of people' are painted, is tempered by strong exception taken to his colouring, the defect wherein is assigned to the use of brown for his shadows, 'preserving the chiaroscuro' indeed, but 'obtaining warmth where it ought not to exist.'<sup>4</sup> As many of Prout's drawings are now

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> *Repository of Arts*, second series, xii. 372. *Magazine of Fine Arts*, i. 121, 122.

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 47, 48.

<sup>4</sup> *Magazine of the Fine Arts*, *ubi supra*.

sadly faded, such contemporary remarks as to their original hues have a special value. The subject of his system of colour will, however, be recurred to presently.

In 1822<sup>1</sup> and 1823 views in Belgium and the Rhenish provinces, and in 1824 some from Bavaria, are added to the Normandy subjects. In the last of these years he sent 'some views of towns and some river scenes of large dimensions,' which Pyne declares to be 'wonders in water-colours,' and three bold sketches from Frankfort, Ratisbon, and Rouen, which attract special attention and praise from the connoisseurs.<sup>2</sup>

A great deal of the popular attractiveness of Prout's foreign street views arose from the lifelike and effective manner in which they were peopled. The same happy facility of applying the principles of the picturesque to a moving multitude with which he had marshalled the excited groups of a shipwreck scene, he now employed to give vitality 'to the animated concourse of the market-place, while preserving an essential unity of impression with the architectural element. Ruskin aptly describes the former quality, in calling Prout's arrangement of living objects a 'decomposing composition,' the grouping 'frank and unforced, but marvellously intricate,' and the crowd 'moving and natural.'<sup>3</sup> And as to the latter, that of accord with the old-world character of the building, he points out with equal justice that the suggested movement is never hurried, no single figure seeming to exert its full strength. All are 'as quiet as the Cathedral of Chartres.'<sup>4</sup> This feeling of repose is enhanced, and the union strengthened, by a broad distribution of light and shade, which favours a general comprehension of the scene, and prevents the eye from dwelling needlessly on separate elements. Nor indeed is there much temptation to do so in the units whereof his multitudes are composed, which have no special attraction in themselves; for, sooth to say, the single figures are devoid of individuality, and pretend neither to detail nor correct drawing. They are those of a landscape painter only.

Thus the crowds in Prout's streets afford a strong contrast to those with which a no less skilful composer in his way, Thomas Rowlandson, had given life to Pugin's views in the 'Microcosm of London.' Dissimilar in all other particulars, the reckless caricaturist just named

<sup>1</sup> It is recorded that in this year all his drawings, being of moderate price, were sold on the first day. *Repository of Arts*, xiii. 358.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 48.

<sup>3</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, p. 42.

and sober Samuel Prout had nevertheless one element at least in common in their habitual use of the reed pen. But they handled it very differently, each producing his own distinct species of line ; Prout's being adapted to the expression of crumbling stone, Rowlandson's to the marking of character in men and women, and giving them energetic action. Therefore the latter depended mainly on his lines to guide the spectator's eye, while the former relied on the resources of light and shade to give a general liveliness to the composition.

It was thus that Prout succeeded in combining in what Mr. Ruskin calls a 'grotesque association' the 'circumstances of ordinary and active life with the solemn memorialism of the elder building,' an association 'which rather pleased by the strangeness than pained by the violence of its contrast.' In his way of doing this, the same writer gives him the credit of having been the first to develop principles by which the treatment of the architectural features of landscape has in recent times been invariably affected. 'Of these principles,' he writes, 'the most original were his familiarisation of the sentiment, while he elevated the subject, of the picturesque. That character had been sought, before his time, either in solitude or in rusticity ; it was supposed to belong only to the savageness of the desert or the simplicity of the hamlet ; it lurked beneath the brows of rocks and the eaves of cottages ; to seek it in a city would have been deemed an extravagance ; to raise it to the height of a cathedral, an heresy. Prout did both, and both simultaneously ; he found and proved in the busy shadows and sculptured gables of the continental street sources of picturesque delight as rich and as interesting as those which had been sought amidst the darkness of thickets and the eminence of rocks ; and he contrasted with the familiar circumstances of urban life, the majesty and the ærial elevation of the most noble architecture, expressing its details in more splendid accumulation, and with a more patient love than ever had been reached or manifested before his time by any artist who introduced such subjects as members of a general composition.'<sup>1</sup> That Prout acted upon these principles and carried them into marvellous effect is indisputable ; and his influence may have been as great as what is here attributed to him. That he was absolutely the first discoverer, either of the picturesque

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849, p. 77.



element in continental architecture, or of the method he adopted in depicting it, is, however, more open to doubt. To regard his work, during this time of transition, as unique, is to ignore the existence of an older painter who worked in the same field, at the same time, and in the same manner, but who is less known to the modern amateur. This was the excellent artist *Henry Edridge*.

Edridge was Prout's senior by fourteen years, and a flourishing painter, in the enjoyment of high patronage, when the latter was little more than a student. But his name had been made in another branch of art. A Londoner, born in Paddington, he had been apprenticed to William Pether, the mezzotint engraver; but, attracting the notice of Reynolds, as a student and silver medalist at the Academy, was allowed to copy in miniature the President's works, and so became very successful as a portraitist in little, using water-colour with delicate finish in the elaboration of faces. Besides many of more exalted persons, there are likenesses by him of Girtin and Dr. Monro, and also of Hearne,<sup>1</sup> beside whose grave, and that of the Doctor's artist son Henry Monro, there rest in the churchyard at Bushey the mortal remains of Edridge. This proximity in death tells of living relations that concern us more than the fact that, five months before he died, Edridge became entitled to write A.R.A. after his name. His portraits, doubtless, gained him the honour. But there was another side to his art. In or about the first year of the century, when (after practising for ten years in Dufour's Court, Broad Street, Golden Square) he settled himself at 64 Margaret Street, Cavendish Square,<sup>2</sup> he must already have been turning some of his attention to landscape. We are told that he made many studies in the region round his future burial place, along with young Girtin, six years his junior, who, we know, died in 1802. He worked also with Hearne, and between 1810 and 1815 'diverted himself by painting landscapes . . . studying nature with great zest and ample care.'<sup>3</sup> They are mostly rural scenes of lanes and hedgerows and

<sup>1</sup> In the Royal Academy Catalogues, No. 299 in 1787, and No. 306 in 1788, are each described as 'Portrait of an Artist,' by Edridge, the names of sitters not being given until the year 1798. There are about a dozen portraits of artists by him at the British Museum, including that of Girtin, of which a cut is described *supra*, p. 95. It is in pencil, as is also another of old Hearne, sketching likewise.

<sup>2</sup> Edridge frequently occupied, as his summer residence, part of a picturesque cottage on the border of the Serpentine in Hyde Park, being charmed with its rural aspect. (*Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 386. See *supra*, p. 415 n.)

<sup>3</sup> *Portfolio*, 1880, pp. 196-200.

rustic buildings such as might be met with nearer London than they now are; not rising above the old domain of the picturesque defined as above by Ruskin. In 1814 he began to exhibit these landscape drawings at the Royal Academy.<sup>1</sup> Of his general works of this class Mr. F. G. Stephens writes: 'Edridge's landscapes often remind us of De Wint's, and they have more colour than Girtin's, less delicate mystery and variety than Turner's, and they are only a little less masculine and studious than Hunt's.'<sup>2</sup> According to the same biographer, whose details were furnished by the artist's family, it was in 1817 (that is to say, two years before Prout's first visit to the Continent) that Edridge also went to France on a sketching excursion, and made studies in Normandy, as well as Paris. In 1819, when he is said to have gone abroad again, he began to exhibit foreign views (with the Cathedrals of Beauvais and Rouen). In 1820 he had four more Normandy subjects of the same class, and one from Abbeville, and in 1821 he had three more from Rouen, and the view of the 'Pont Neuf, Paris,' which is now at South Kensington, in the Smith bequest.

Now, all these events occurred, as we have seen, before the time when Samuel Prout established himself in the leading position which he ever after maintained. So that, if the qualities claimed as peculiar in Prout's works are also found in those of Edridge, the honour of originality must be conceded to the latter artist. There is no direct evidence of the one having seen the works of the other; but a comparison between the two shows, it must be admitted, a very remarkable similarity of style and treatment, each preserving, nevertheless, his distinctive character.<sup>3</sup> The resemblance is even more striking in the pencil sketches of the two artists than in their coloured drawings. Opinions may differ as to the comparative merit. Mr. Stephens<sup>4</sup> gives to Prout's pencil drawings a preference over Edridge's closely similar ones, but considers that 'as a painter in colour of old buildings Edridge leaves Prout, with his *vermiculated* touch and his conventionalities of drawing-mastership *in excelsis*, at an immeasurable distance in the rear.'

<sup>1</sup> 'A Farmhouse in Buckinghamshire' (No. 564) is at the South Kensington Museum, in the William Smith bequest.

<sup>2</sup> *Portfolio, ubi supra.*

<sup>3</sup> A contemporary description, in the *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 9, of Edridge's Rouen drawings 'La Croix de Pierre' (1820) and 'Market-day' (1821) reads exactly like a critique on works by Prout, except as to the characterization of the figures.

<sup>4</sup> *Ubi supra.*

This brings us back to the subject of Prout's colour. The following notes,<sup>1</sup> which are among Mr. Jenkins's papers, set forth something of the artist's method of work: 'Prout seems to have had a regular mechanical system in preparing his drawings, laying them in in sepia, or brown and grey, the outlines gone over with a pen in which a warm brown colour was used. His system was evidently founded on the practice of the early water-colour painters, only substituting brown for the Indian ink used by the early draftsmen in the foregrounds of their drawings. Mr. Prout told me that he used a particular grey he made himself.' His 'brown and grey he kept in bottles in a liquid state.' 'Mr. Prout's method of work,' says Ruskin, 'was entirely founded on the quite elementary qualities of white paper and black Cumberland lead; and expressly terminated within the narrow range of prismatic effects producible by a brown or blue outline, with a wash of ochre or cobalt.'<sup>2</sup> Of his colour the same writer had, however, written as follows at a prior date, after a study of the painter's works of all periods: 'It is a quality from which the character of his subjects naturally withdraws much of his attention, and of which sometimes that character precludes any high attainment, but nevertheless the truest and happiest association of hues in sun and shade to be found in modern water-colour Art (excepting<sup>3</sup> only the studies of Hunt and De Wint) will be found in portions of Prout's more important works.'<sup>4</sup>

Still it is in his pencil sketches made on the spot that we may best read the impressions on Prout's mind. His health did not permit him to paint pictures in the open air.<sup>5</sup> 'Prout is essentially a draughtsman with the lead pencil, . . . his drawings prepared for the water-colour room were usually no more than mechanical abstracts, made absolutely for the support of his household, from the really vivid sketches which, with the whole instinct and joy of his nature, he made all through the cities of ancient Christendom, without an instant of flagging energy, and without a thought of money payment. They became to him afterwards a precious library, of which he never parted with a single volume as long as he lived.'<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Referring to a collection of Prout's sketches dispersed by Sotheby and Wilkinson in May 1852.

<sup>2</sup> *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, pp. 8, 9.

<sup>3</sup> The writer further excepts 'drawings of professed oil painters, as of Stothard and Turner.'

<sup>4</sup> *Art Journal*, 1 March, 1849, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Jenkins writes: 'He seems to have rarely made colour sketches, from the objects themselves.' (MS.)

<sup>6</sup> *Notes on Prout and Hunt*, pp. 29, 30.



Alas! it could not be so with his fellow-worker in the same field. To Edridge, the opening of the Continent had come too late in life. He was not destined to dispute the palm with Prout by a continued rivalry; for he died the day after the opening of the first exhibition of the Water-Colour Society at the Egyptian Hall, namely on the 23rd of April, 1821.

In 1824, Prout paid his first visit to Italy; and thenceforward views in Rome and Venice and the intervening towns of Verona, Vicenza, Padua, &c. are added to those from France, Belgium, and Germany. He made a long sojourn in Venice. We read in the *Somerset House Gazette* of the 25th of September that he was still there. On 19 December, Uwins in Rome gives him a professional letter of introduction to his brother the Doctor, saying, 'Mr. Prout has been making a tour in Italy, and has been long enough in Rome to see my manière être, &c.'<sup>1</sup> In Florence 'the Plymouth artist' had introduced him to Eastlake.<sup>2</sup>

The peculiarity of touch, before referred to, with which Prout manipulated his reed pen, derived first from his practice among the moorstone cottages of Cornwall, and developed in his delineation of Norman Gothic structures, was well adapted to portray the picturesque elements of Venetian architecture. 'Since Gentile Bellini,' writes Ruskin, 'no one had regarded the palaces of Venice with so affectionate an understanding of the purpose and expression of their wealth of detail. In this respect the city of the sea has been, and remains, peculiarly his own.'<sup>3</sup> The Venice of Prout superseded that of Canaletto; but the glorious sun of Turner's Venice had yet to rise.<sup>4</sup>

The limitations of Prout's manner of drawing were more apparent when he attempted to represent classic buildings; yet he also found fit material for his pencil touch in the crumbling stone and brick of ancient Rome. Nor was his dexterity in composition confined to one class of subjects, still less to one style of architecture.<sup>5</sup>

With the change in his class of subjects there came a corresponding

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, i. 237.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 291.

<sup>3</sup> *Art Journal*, *ubi supra*.

<sup>4</sup> 'In 1833 Turner exhibited his first pictures of Venice, the last home of his imagination. The date of his first visit to the "floating city" is uncertain.' (*Turner*, by W. C. Monkhouse, p. 114.)

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Jenkins wrote (MS. Notes): 'He seems to have looked for a tumble-about picturesque rather than the beauty of proportion. This feeling might be very well in portraying rickety old buildings, but must be inadmissible in the regular and beautiful forms of Greek or Italian architecture.'

change in his relations with the printing press and the engraver's art. Hitherto, except as to what he had done for Britton and other topographic collectors, the reproduction of his designs had been almost confined to the educational works before described, in which the outlines of the examples were etched by himself in the soft ground. He now sought a wider circulation to be created alone by interest in the subject and its treatment. For this purpose he took up the new art of lithography, which was soon to supersede entirely that of soft-ground etching. Among a series of folio views issued in 1822 by Rodwell and Martin under the general title *Britannia Delineata*, which never got beyond the county of Kent, are three lithographs by Prout,<sup>1</sup> of 'Interior of Dover Harbour' (dated 10 Oct. 1822); 'Barfreston Church,' West End (1 Jan. 1823); and 'Sandgate' (1 Jan. 1823). The last is a fine sea-piece, with a vessel in distress. Prout's foreign drawings in this manner began with twenty-four or twenty-five (increased in a later edition to thirty) lithographs, published in oblong quarto in 1824 by Ackermann, with the title '*Illustrations of the Rhine*, drawn from Nature and on Stone by S. Prout,' and, like nearly all the early lithographs, 'printed at C. Hullmandel's Lithographic Establishment, Great Marlbro. Street.' The size of the prints is  $7\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$  in. and the dates are from February to August 1824. They are on white paper, with a good deal of tone applied in broad even shadows, enlivened by high lights in which the paper is left blank, and strengthened by spirited lines touched in with a sharper point. These were followed in after years by other excellent works on stone by the same hand. But an interval occurred during which other means were employed to disseminate his designs. Four views by Prout, three of Rouen and one of Ghent ( $13\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$  in.), are in *Fac-similes of Water-Colour Drawings* (Bowyer), 1825. Early in 1827 Ackermann and Prout had some scheme on foot for issuing a work on Venice, for which they asked Uwins to write the letterpress. This he declined, and the project came to nothing.<sup>2</sup>

In the mean time, however, Prout's delineations, chiefly of foreign subjects, began to be reproduced in a more elaborate style by leading line engravers of the day, in the serial publications then rising rapidly in fashion. Four intermediate English vignettes by Prout should be noted, which occur in W. B. Cooke's *Picturesque Views of the Southern*

<sup>1</sup> The rest are by Harding, Hullmandel, and Westall.

<sup>2</sup> See *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 27-30.

*Coast*, 2 vols. folio, 1826, celebrated for its fine series of prints after Turner. They are, 'Hurst Castle' and 'Lulworth Cliffs' in vol. i., and 'Weymouth Castle' and 'Dartmouth Castle' in vol. ii. The first and last are dated 20 June, 1825. There are also a set of lithographs of '*Six Drawings after Prout*, by Edward Hull, London. Published by Engelmann, Graf, Coindet & Co., 92 Dean Street, Soho—at Paris and Mulhouse by Engelmann & Co., 1829'—small folio, with dates December 1828 and January 1829. The sizes vary from  $8\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$  to  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, all upright. They are printed on yellowish tinted paper, and heightened with white; and give the breadth and general effect of Prout's composition without his peculiar touch. Two each are from Venice and Verona, the others 'At Thiers' and 'On the Rhine.' In 1828 we first recognize his vigorous and compact style of treatment in the small prints of an annual pocket-book published by Suttaby & Co. of Amen Corner, called the *Royal Repository*, the plates for which were engraved by or under the direction of John Pye. For the next ten years the great majority of the designs for these bright little plates were furnished by Samuel Prout.<sup>1</sup> Fifty-two of his views in Switzerland and Italy are reproduced in the same style on a rather larger scale in the two small-octavo volumes, with letterpress by Thomas Roscoe, entitled, 'The Tourist in Switzerland and Italy,' and 'The Tourist in Italy,' better known under the publisher's name as 'Jennings's' *Landscape Annual* for 1830 and 1831. The quality and resource of Prout's system of composition may be well studied in these truthful and effective plates, executed by some of the best engravers. The early volumes of the *Annals*, the *Forget-me-not* from 1826, and the *Keepsake* from 1830, contain foreign views by Prout; but these belong to a group that appertains to a subsequent period.

Prout exhibited 191 drawings in the Water-Colour Society's gallery during Cristall's presidency, at the end of which a career of twenty more years of distinction was still before him. In 1828 or 1829 he was honoured with the appointment of 'Painter in Water-Colours in Ordinary to his Majesty,' which title (with its after modification in the time of the Queen and Prince Albert) remained a suffix to his name in the catalogue until the year of his death. On the

<sup>1</sup> Proof impressions, to the year 1839, when the work seems to have been discontinued, are in the print-room of the British Museum. They are among the above engraver's pocket-book plates, presented by his daughter, Miss Pye.



11th of February, 1830, he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

From what has been written above, it will have been seen that Samuel Prout, distinguished as he was for views of buildings, was nevertheless more of a picturesque than an architectural draftsman. As his first patron had found out among the Cornish churches, his *forte* lay neither in accurate perspective nor in delineating detail. What constituted the peculiar attraction of his works, and placed them in a category of their own, distinct from those of more objective painters in the latter branch of art, was the loving human sentiment that pervades them all, to which his broad and masterly treatment was ever subordinate, while assimilating them under one pronounced style. Possessing little in common with the severer school of Pugin or Mackenzie, the motive of Prout's works is equally distinct in character from the elegance of Wild, the impressive grandeur of Frederick Nash's interiors, and the more elegant sketchiness of the same master's later manner.

Strengthened by the drawings of these four artists (the joint number of whose contributions to the gallery from 1821 to 1831 exactly equalled that of Prout's alone), the department of architectural art was richly represented throughout this period. Nash and Mackenzie were indeed to adorn the gallery for another quarter of a century; but the careers of Pugin and Wild were soon to come to an end. Many of the exhibited drawings of these artists were designed for reproduction in illustrated publications or series of plates of the class before mentioned.

AUGUSTUS PUGIN, for example, whose exhibits after the first year did not amount to more than one or two per annum, continued to send studies of the Pavilion at Brighton together with a few views of Paris, and about half a dozen subjects from Lincoln. But Pugin's labours were chiefly devoted to carrying on the scheme which he had already set on foot, of issuing works of a strictly professional character, for the use of architects. Some mention of these is necessary to a complete account of his career. Their names are so nearly alike that they may easily be imagined to be less numerous than they are. In 1821 he published, under a similar title, a far more elaborate work than the sixty-one etchings above mentioned to have been executed in conjunction with Frederick Mackenzie. In those the subjects,

which had been drawn in perspective and fully shaded, were not exclusively confined to the wants of actual builders. But the new *Specimens of Gothic Architecture*, 'selected from various antient edifices in England,' consisted of 'plans, elevations, sections, and parts at large,' to exemplify, not only 'various styles,' but 'practical construction.' Although Ferrey, as before stated, attributes to John Nash the first idea of a work of this kind, the honour of perfecting the plan was claimed by the late E. J. Willson, the architectural historian of Lincoln, who tells us (in the prefatory article before cited) that he communicated it to Pugin in the autumn of 1818, when the latter went to that city to make drawings of the Minster for the fifth volume of Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*, then in course of publication ; and that thereupon he began to draw for the new 'Specimens,' to which work Willson supplied the literary part. The first quarto volume is dedicated to John Nash, 'private architect to the King.' It had an extensive sale, and was followed by a second, 'completed at the close of 1822,' and dated the following year. In this work Britton was joint proprietor. The partnership was continued in two succeeding publications, the first whereof was *Illustrations of the Public Buildings of London*, 2 vols. 8vo, published in numbers from 1823 to 1828. It is mainly architectural, but also contains perspective views, almost or quite in outline, of churches, theatres, palaces, and various institutions, as well as domestic street architecture, and bridges. Thus it in some degree forms a supplement to Pugin's share in the old 'Microcosm of London.' This new work had long been in preparation. The drawings for it were mostly made, under Pugin's direction, by his pupils, whom he largely employed in his numerous publications. Charles Mathews did many of them, and tells us how he suddenly grew an inch taller on seeing his name in print for the first time, under a section of St. Paul's.<sup>1</sup> The third work issued in conjunction with Britton was *Specimens of the Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, 4to, 1828. Here again details were given for the use of builders together with perspective views, the picturesque treatment of the subject having already been dealt with in the most effective manner in Cotman's etchings. To prepare this series he went to Normandy, *viâ* Brighton and Dieppe, with some of his pupils, in August 1825, having been there in the previous year with Mrs. Pugin and their son Welby. He had the

<sup>1</sup> Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, p. 44.

help of several learned French antiquaries. Pugin was an advocate of the preservation of ancient buildings *in situ*, as well as a diligent graphic recorder of their features, and he was therefore very indignant one day at finding some of his pupils in the act of imitating the pilfering habits of tourists by 'conveying' (as ancient Pistol would have called it) an ornate capital from the beautiful ruins of Jumièges.<sup>1</sup> Britton's letterpress to this work was brought out separately from the plates, in order to save them from the compulsory gift of eleven copies to public libraries, required by law in the case of printed books. The same device was employed in the issue of Nash's work, the *Illustrations of the Pavilion at Brighton*.<sup>2</sup> The complete publication of this latter book, (for which, as aforesaid, Pugin had been employed to make drawings) was interrupted, first by the King's death in 1830, and then in 1835 by that of old Mr. Nash at the age of eighty-two. After the latter event the plates were purchased by Mr. J. B. Nichols, who brought out an edition of them, with an historic account of the palace by E. W. Brayley, in August 1838. Besides Pugin, the names of C. Moore, Copley Fielding, and J. Stephanoff appear under the prints, as assistants, in a few of the drawings, the last-mentioned artist's contribution being obviously the groups of courtly figures that people the apartments.

To Pugin's apprentices it must have been, as Charles Mathews calls it, a 'crowning happiness' when their genial instructor took them all to Paris to help him in making a series of drawings there for a later publication. After working for him all day, they would spend their evenings at the theatre, in one case at least to the future advantage of the British public in another way. The result of their graphic industry was published in two quarto volumes in 1830-31, entitled, '*Paris and its Environs*, displayed in a series of picturesque views, the drawings made under the direction of Mr. Pugin and engraved under the superintendence of Mr. C. Heath; with topographical and historical descriptions.' The plates are engraved in line, with two views, measuring  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$  inches, on each, making 204 subjects in all, and bear dates from 1828 to 1831. The greater number are drawn by B. Ferrey, T. T. Bury, and J. Nash, the last-named being, no doubt, Joseph Nash, afterwards a distinguished Member of our Society. Some are by 'A. Pugin junior.' With the

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey's *Lives of the Pugins*, pp. 19-21.

<sup>2</sup> See *Repository of Arts*, third series, vol. viii. (1826), p. 365.



year 1828 the publication in parts began of another work, similar in plan to the 'Specimens,' but containing more elaborate subjects, topographically arranged. It was called, '*Examples of Gothic Architecture*, selected &c.' (as in the former work). Of this a first series, completed in 1831, contains seventy-five plates from drawings by pupils, under Pugin's direction. He did not live to finish the second series, which was brought out by his executors, and his son Augustus Welby Pugin, in 1836.

Contemporaneously with these publications Pugin brought out several minor allied works, illustrating Gothic architecture in a fashion somewhat less severe. From 1828 to 1831 there were appearing in periodic numbers a series of 100 prints of *Gothic Ornaments*, selected by him in these years from various ancient buildings in England and France, and drawn on stone, mostly by J. D. Harding. In 1831 nine of these were reissued with a supplement of twenty-two to make up a set of illustrations of *Ornamental Timber Gables*. The latter were drawn by Benjamin Ferrey, under Pugin's direction. Another of his pupils, Joseph Nash, above named, was employed by him to draw on stone, from original sketches taken under his direction, perspective views of the edifices which were only represented in the 'Examples' by geometrical elevations and sections, or partially and in detail. These (twenty-three in number) were published in 1830 with the title, *A Series of Views illustrative of Gothic Architecture*, and accompanied by descriptions from the pen of Mr. W. H. Leeds.

Besides the works above mentioned, Pugin supplied some of the coloured illustrations to Sir George Nayler's sumptuous folio volume on the *Coronation of his Most Sacred Majesty King George the Fourth*. Our artist appears to have been engaged in making elaborate drawings for this work in 1821.<sup>1</sup> One of them was exhibited in the Society's gallery in 1823. Pugin, however, contributed the architectural part of two plates only, whereof the figures are by J. Stephanoff. These prints are dated Jan. 1824. The whole work was not completed and published till 1837, when artist, author, and the King himself had all gone to their graves.

In the *Forget-me-not* for 1826 is a 'Banqueting Room,' engraved by Winckles, after A. Pugin; and for 1834, a pretty presentation plate designed by him and engraved by W. Kelsall. Pugin's name

<sup>1</sup> *Magazine of the Fine Arts*.

is also attached to one or two books in the production of which he took a small part only. For example, to 'A. Pugin and J. Gendall' are attributed the designs of twenty-four coloured prints in a *Picturesque Tour of the Seine* by M. Sauvan, published by Ackermann in 4to, 1821; whereas Pugin's share is confined to two Paris views, for one of which he merely furnished a sketch. An English edition of Charles Normand's *New Parallel of the Orders of Architecture* bears his name, although he does not appear to have added any original matter to it beyond two plates by other hands.

While Pugin laboured thus assiduously in aid of the professional architect, his own practice as an erector of buildings was chiefly limited to a few country villas. But he was concerned in the construction of one remarkable edifice, designed to serve the sister art of pictorial, or rather scenic, representation. This was the building used for exhibiting the *Diorama*, a sight, strange to say, unknown to the present generation. It was, indeed, little more than a gigantic peep-show, large enough to be seen at once by a body of spectators seated in a dark chamber. The object displayed was a semi-transparent painting (either of a view *en l'air*, or of the interior of a building), the edges being concealed by the interposition of a black screen, in front of which no light was admitted. Variations of effect were produced by the alternate and gradual illumination of the front and back of the picture, special incidents being added by means of the magic lantern or *phantasmagoria*, and by devices employed for stage illusions. 'The combination of transparent, semi-transparent, and opaque colouring, still further assisted by the power of varying both the effects and the degree of light and shade, renders the diorama,' says a writer in the *Penny Cyclopædia*, 'the most perfect scenic representation of nature, and adapts it peculiarly for moonlight subjects or for showing such "accidents" in landscape as sudden gleams of sunshine and their disappearance. It is also,' he adds, 'unrivalled for shewing architecture, particularly interiors, as powerful relief may be obtained without that exaggeration in the shadows which is almost inevitable in every other mode of painting.' The diorama was devised by two ingenious French artists, namely Daguerre (the inventor of the Daguerreotype) and Charles Maria Bouton, and was first exhibited in Paris. Mr. Smith, an English resident there, sent over for Pugin to inspect the building in which it had been set up, in order to have one designed for erection here, with some suggested improvements. The

result was the edifice in question, planned and constructed under the joint direction of our artist and his friend and future executor Mr. James Morgan, civil engineer, completed in four months, and opened to the public on the 6th of October, 1823.<sup>1</sup> As an exhibition, the diorama, alas ! has ceased to exist ; but the house stands near the south-east entrance of the Regent's Park, in the centre of the side of Park Square facing west. It is now used as a Baptist chapel. The following description of this curious building, which was contrived for exhibiting two separate pictures, is from the *Penny Cyclopædia* : 'The spectatory or saloon for the visitors is a rotunda forty feet in diameter, with a single opening or proscenium about twenty feet wide ; and placed within another rotunda having two openings communicating with the picture-rooms, each of which contains a view. When a change of scene takes place the inner rotunda is turned by means of machinery beneath the floor, till the proscenium is gently shifted from the opening into one picture-room to that of the other, the two being quite contiguous. At the next change it is shifted back again, so that the whole space passed over backwards and forwards is about one-third of the entire circumference, or double that portion of the circle forming the proscenium.' In 1824 Pugin made plans for an embankment of the Thames, and a park in Tyburnia, neither of which was carried into execution : and in or about 1827 he was concerned with Brunel in planning the cemetery at Kensal Green.

From the year 1823, Pugin, constant to the same neighbourhood since the date of the Society's foundation, resided at 105 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, where he died after a long illness on the 19th of December, 1832, aged between sixty and seventy. At the anniversary meeting of the Society held on the last day of the preceding month, a letter was read from him announcing his resignation, and also his relinquishment of all claims upon the funds of the Society, on account of his not having for some time past contributed by his works to the success of their exhibitions. It is recorded that thereupon the Secretary was desired by the seventeen members present to express to Mr. Pugin their sincere and deep regret, 'and to assure him that although through his other professional engagements the productions of his pencil had not enriched their walls of late years, he had by his gentlemanly, disinterested and honourable conduct upon every occasion possessed, as he had deserved, their highest esteem.' This respect

<sup>1</sup> See *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 156, 157.



was further testified by a muster of Members representing the Society to follow his remains to the grave, according, as it was reported, to the expressed wish of the deceased.

Mrs. Pugin did not survive her husband more than a year; and both were buried at St. Mary's Church, in her native Islington. They had lived to see, not only their son Welby's marriage, in 1831 (to Miss Garnet, grand-niece of Girtin's old master, Dayes), but to lament her death in the succeeding year in a first confinement.

Pugin always spoke in terms of the greatest regard of many of his comrades in the Water-Colour Society, 'particularly of Copley Fielding and George Robson, whose friendship he enjoyed.' In his later years he was a frequent guest at the table of his old friend Mathews, when the actor lived at Highgate, in the midst of a distinguished literary and artistic circle.<sup>1</sup>

At about the same time with Samuel Prout, CHARLES WILD had enlarged the field of his art by sketching abroad; and among his first contributions to the gallery of the reformed Society he began a series of foreign cathedrals with six elaborate drawings of that of Amiens. These were succeeded by works of a similar kind, illustrating the ecclesiastical architecture of France and Belgium, and in and after 1826 a few from Rhenish Germany. To them were added some studies of civil buildings, such as Heidelberg Castle and the Archbishopal Palace at Liège. At the same time he did not leave off exhibiting illustrations of English Cathedrals; though his work on Worcester (brought out in 1823, as before mentioned) was the last of his own published series. All, or nearly so, of Wild's exhibited drawings were done for engraving; but their tender and harmonious colour and delicate execution confer upon them a high merit as independent works of art. A drawing of the 'Penance of Jane Shore,' exhibited with (probably) a study for it with the same title in 1827, must at least have partaken of the nature of a 'subject' or 'historical' picture.

Although he continued to exhibit until 1833, and even etched in that year the set of outlines mentioned below, he was more or less afflicted by loss of sight from the year 1827, and was at last obliged from that cause to relinquish his art. His resignation, announced on the 10th of June, 1833, was met by the following considerate resolution: 'That the announcement of Mr. Wild's resignation, which

<sup>1</sup> Ferrey's *Recollections of the Pugins*, pp. 7, 8, 29.

under any circumstances would have been regretted by the Society, is the more deeply lamented while they reflect upon the sad visitation that bereaves them of so respected—so valuable a Member. Though they cannot remove nor even alleviate this cause for Mr. Wild's retirement, yet there is a measure of *justice* in their power; and while they collectively and individually declare to him that under similar circumstances they should consider it as *their right*, they confidently trust that no feelings of Mr. Wild's will stand in the way of the performance. It is that, after the adjustment of the accounts at the close of the Exhibition, the Treasurer be directed to pay Mr. Wild such a sum as his family would have been entitled to according to the provisions of the 32nd Bye Law' (i.e. in case of his death). His share amounted to 89*l*.

He died on the 4th of August, 1835, at 35 Albemarle Street, where he had lived since 1820. From the date of his first election, 1809, to his last appearance, he had sent to the Society's rooms a total of 158 contributions, his name having been absent on but two occasions. We have seen that he was one of the Members who helped the Society into its permanent home. He served also as Treasurer for 1823, and as Secretary from 1826 to 1831, at the end of which year we find a vote of thanks recorded for 'long and valuable services.'

In continuation of the list already given of graphic publications in which his pencil was employed, the following have to be added, some of which were not issued till after his death: *Select Examples of the Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Middle Ages, chiefly in France*. Twelve coloured aquatints (11 × 15 inches) representing cathedrals and churches at Amiens, Rheims, Rouen, Beauvais, Chartres, Strasbourg, and Cologne. The issue was completed in June 1826. Some, if not all, of the drawings were exhibited in the Society's gallery between 1821 and 1829.—*Select Examples of the Ecclesiastical Architecture of the Middle Ages in England*. Published by Jennings and Chaplin. Four of Wild's drawings for this work were exhibited in the gallery in 1828 and 1832.—*Twelve Etched Outlines selected from Sketches in Belgium, Germany, and France*, with descriptive accounts. Published 1833.<sup>1</sup> Eight of the drawings were exhibited in the gallery in that year.—*Selected Examples of Architectural Grandeur in Belgium, Germany, and France*. These consist of two series of twenty-four etchings, by John Le Keux and others, executed under Wild's direc-

<sup>1</sup> A second series was published in 1836.

tion, from his sketches. They were published in 1837.—In Sir George Nayler's *Coronation of George the Fourth*, brought out in the same year, there are three coloured plates after Wild, dated 1824, one of the Proclamation at Carlton House, and two of the Royal Banquet in Westminster Hall. He also assisted the Rev. James Dallaway in the illustration of his *History of the Western Division of the County of Sussex*, the publication of which extended from 1815 to 1830, with views of gentlemen's seats. In the *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, 1833, is 'Cathedral of Cambray,' engraved by R. Sands after C. Wild.

FREDERICK NASH did not rejoin the Society until it was settled in Pall Mall East, when he was elected a Member once more, on the 9th of April, 1824. This fresh start in his professional, nearly coincided with a no less important one in his domestic, career. On the 17th of April, barely a week after his re-election, he married Miss Eliza Bennett,<sup>1</sup> at St. Pancras new church. The union gave him an attached partner for the remaining thirty and more years which he had yet to live. As they had no family, his wife was able to be constantly with him, accompanying him in his tours, and at times reading to him or writing her journal while he sketched. They resided at first in a small house, No. 1 Robert Street, Hampstead Road, which Nash had built in 1822, with the intention of making it his home for the rest of his life. Upon the top of it he had erected a gazebo with four sides, commanding a view of Hampstead and Highgate. This was his studio for painting skies, and a station for watching their various effects.

To the exhibition of 1824 he brought another very large drawing of the interior of Westminster Abbey. What in that of 1811 was called a 'funeral' is now described as a 'Royal' procession. Pyne<sup>2</sup> calls it a repetition of the same subject; and it is probably the magnificent work (44 × 35 in.) which now belongs to Lord Northbrook, and is understood to have been bought by Sir Thomas Lawrence for 150*l.* and afterwards sold by him to Sir Thomas Baring,<sup>3</sup> who presented it to his sister. This drawing (which was exhibited in 1884

<sup>1</sup> She appears, by an entry in Dr. Percy's MS. Catalogue at the British Museum, to have been sister to the Associate William James Bennett, of whom mention will be made in a subsequent chapter.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 128.

<sup>3</sup> The name of Baring is given by Mr. Redford as that of the purchaser for 130*l.* 4*s.* of a 'Westminster Abbey' by F. Nash, at Colnaghi's sale in 1867.



and 1887 at conversaziones of the Royal Water-Colour Society Art Club, and also among a collection of 'Drawings of Architectural Subjects' at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1884) is not identical with Mr. Carr's before mentioned ; but they are very similar in treatment, and almost equally impressive. On the strength of either drawing, one may give credit to the report that Turner pronounced Nash the finest architectural painter of his day, and may on that judgment give him the second place to his encomiast, who was unquestionably the greatest. A proposed mezzotint by J. Lupton (24 x 18 inches) of the drawing of 1824 is advertized in the Society's Catalogue for 1825.

In the June of the same year, 1824, Nash went with his newly married wife to France, to make a set of drawings of places in the neighbourhood of Paris. It was a commission given him by a gentleman of fortune, who had a taste for publishing, a Mr. D'Ostervald, of Paris and Neufchatel (Switzerland), for which our artist received 300*l*. The drawings were to be engraved and published in Paris. Three frames containing a number of them were in the gallery in 1825. But the proposed work was never brought out. One drawing of the same year, a 'View of Calais Harbour,' is announced in the catalogue as about 'to be engraved for Mr. T. F. D'Ostervald's work of the *Coasts and Ports of France*, now publishing.' Whether Nash had any further share in the latter publication does not appear. But he had an adventure in relation probably to this same drawing, in which Hogarth's oft-told experience near the same spot was in a measure repeated. The following is Mrs. Nash's account of the affair :<sup>1</sup> 'In his way to the French capital in 1824 he stopped a night at Calais, having taken places in the diligence for departure the next morning immediately after breakfast (as it was his custom to rise at five o'clock), and taking his sketch-book with him. While drawing in the fortifications a sentinel approached him and said it was not allowed that anyone should draw in the fortifications, and that he must take him to the guard house. He offered to let him look at what he was doing ; but he objected ; and Mr. Nash walked quietly with him to the guard house. There he found several soldiers, and while waiting for the commandant (who had been sent for), Mr. N. amused himself by sketching one of the men who had been looking at him most fiercely,

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

and who seemed higher than the others. When the men saw, by peeping over his shoulder, what he was doing, they were delighted, and their rough and rude manners changed to comparative complaisance ; which led Mr. N. to believe the man was no favourite with the rest. At last the commandant arrived, and taking the sketch-book and looking over it with evident satisfaction, he politely returned it, saying there was nothing in it to justify his further detention. He was only released time enough to make a hasty breakfast and depart. The waiter at the hotel had been sent by his wife in all directions, who was greatly alarmed at his absence, not suspecting the cause.' The incident was one the like of which has occurred, and still occurs, to other English sketchers abroad ; and, as we shall presently see, nearly the same thing happened again to Nash himself a few years afterwards.

In 1824, Nash also exhibited a very elaborate picture at the 'British Gallery' representing 'the Inthronation of his Majesty King George the Fourth,' which must necessarily have been in oil. Pyne laments the waste of the artist's great talent over a work of so much 'sameness of circumstantial details.'<sup>1</sup> This picture was engraved in mezzotint by C. Turner (12 × 14 in.), and some copies of the print were coloured. In the *Literary Souvenir* for 1825 there is a print of 'Paris from Père la Chaise,' engraved by E. Finden after F. Nash ; and in that year he is once more in Paris, employed in work of a somewhat similar kind to that just above mentioned. Thither he had repaired at the request of Sir Thomas Lawrence, to assist him in the accessories of a portrait group of the French King and Royal Family. Nash accordingly supplied his painted majesty of France with the representation of a throne, as he had previously furnished the pictured royalty of Great Britain. In 1827 there are again some of his elaborate church interiors, of Westminster and Windsor, and in 1828 of Durham ; with congregations of worshippers or processions of figures ; and in the latter year a view of Cheapside with the Lord Mayor's coach.

The Durham series, which formed six out of seven of his exhibits in 1828, were the result of studies made in that city in the previous autumn of 1827, 'both inside the cathedral and also from the banks of the river. The former,' writes Mrs. Nash,<sup>2</sup> 'were purchased by Mr. Salvin the architect, and a large drawing of the Cathedral from the

<sup>1</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 29.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

banks was purchased by Thomas Griffith, Esq., of Norwood. The others are dispersed.' While the Nashes were at Durham, the painter had a pleasant interview with his old patron, Sir Thomas Lawrence, at a ball given in honour of the Duke of Wellington, where there were many distinguished guests. The President of the Royal Academy, who came for the day only, expressly to form one of a procession to receive the Duke, had written a kind letter to Nash, pleading want of time to see his drawings. 'In the morning, at an early hour,' he wrote, 'I quit Durham. You see that I have as much voluntary action as the spoke of a wheel in a railway. Durham,' he concludes, 'is so fine a scene for picturesque matter, that I shall be glad to find *you* there.'<sup>1</sup>

In 1829 he had as many as eighteen drawings of English and foreign subjects; including some of the 'Ruins of St. Mary's Abbey, York,' which he made for the Society of Antiquaries, and afterwards copied on stone for that Society's publications;<sup>2</sup> and also three views of Snelston Hall, near Ashbourne, Derbyshire, of which he painted a large oil picture for the proprietor, George Harrison, Esq., for 105*l*. In 1830, nine out of his eleven subjects are taken for the first time from the Netherlands, and are evidently of the more ordinary picturesque class, being street or river scenes, and none of ecclesiastical buildings. He also contributed a print to the *Literary Souvenir* for the following year, engraved by E. Goodall, of 'The Packet Boat entering the Harbour of Ghent.' In the same year, 1830, he shifted his sketching-ground to Normandy, where he was again accompanied by his faithful spouse, whose journal records another slight difference with the French military authorities at Caen as to the proper domain of landscape art. 'It was,' she writes, 'during the revolution of 1831,<sup>3</sup> at the most critical time, as there had been some fighting in the town, that while sketching in the fortifications he was observed by the officer on duty, who politely cautioned him not to continue there. Mr. N. said it was only a picturesque bit which had taken his fancy, and begged to remain ten minutes longer to complete his sketch. The officer bowed and walked away; but finding the artist still kept his position after the ten minutes had expired, he returned and said rather angrily that if he did not immediately leave the spot, it would be his duty to arrest him.'<sup>4</sup> His eleven drawings in the exhibition of 1831 show that Nash's tour had embraced several towns on the river Loire.

<sup>1</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>3</sup> This should apparently be '1830.'

<sup>2</sup> See p. 371 *supra*.

<sup>4</sup> J. J. J. MSS.



He exhibited sixty-five framefuls of drawings (containing eighty-five subjects) during Cristall's presidency, but was a more prolific contributor for many years after its close.

FREDERICK MACKENZIE, who, it will be remembered, had been a Member of the 'Oil and Water Colour,' reappeared as an Associate of the reformed Society in 1822 (with yet another drawing of the King's coronation<sup>1</sup>); was a full Member again the next year; and so remained for thirty more, till the day of his death. He was not a prolific exhibitor, rarely sending more than one or two works at a time to the gallery, his total number of drawings there during Cristall's presidency being barely a dozen. Most are of interiors, and all of English buildings, except two from Rouen (in 1823 and 1829).

Mackenzie's works stand on intermediate ground between those of Pugin and Nash, being designed less specially than the former to assist the professional builder, and depending less than the latter on a picturesque treatment of ancient structures. His domain is more restricted than that of either, within the bounds of architectural topography. To his work for the press during this period belongs a set of *Illustrations of the Principal Antiquities of Oxfordshire*, engraved by Joseph Skelton, and published at Oxford, in folio in 1823, and in quarto in 1827.

Two architectural draftsmen of less celebrity put in a short appearance in the gallery at Pall Mall East, mostly during this period. The name, if little more, has to be recorded of CHARLES MOORE, of 1 Rathbone Place, Oxford Street, who was elected an Associate on the 11th of February, 1822, and in the seven years from that to 1828 exhibited eight drawings and no more. He was one of the many artists employed in publications by Britton and Ackermann, and it is probable that most, if not all, of these drawings, which are of strictly architectural subjects, were executed for engraving in such works. Two, representing interiors of the Brighton Pavilion, were evidently for Nash's work on that building, Moore's name being mentioned therein as one of the draftsmen employed. In Britton's *Cathedral Antiquities* are two plates of Exeter Cathedral

<sup>1</sup> The exhibition of this drawing with the Society appears to have required a special permission, which was given at the meeting of the 6th of April, 1821, when the artist was elected. Probably this was to take it out of the rule against the admission of portraits.

after C. Moore, published in 1826 ; and in the *Forget-me-not* for that year is an interior by him. Such is the very meagre record obtained of this artist.

RICHARD HAMILTON ESSEX, elected 10 February, 1823, and an Associate until he resigned on the 4th of March, 1837, also exhibited architectural subjects regularly during the reign of Crisall, and for four subsequent years, his name appearing in the catalogue of 1836 for the last time, but without 'effects.' The total number of these drawings is seventy, with a steady average of five or six a year. Two are original designs, and one (in 1825) is in the nature of a subject piece, representing crusaders before the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre. The rest are chiefly of English cathedrals and churches, except in 1830-31, when all but one are from Belgium. Besides these (according to Graves), he had twelve works at the Royal Academy,<sup>1</sup> and two in Suffolk Street, between 1824 and 1853.

R. H. Essex made a series of drawings of the architectural ornaments and painted glass in the Temple Church, from which forty lithographic facsimiles were made, and published by John Weale in a quarto volume in 1845, with an introduction by Sydney Smirke. They are in the nature of diagrams, with no pretence to be works of fine art in themselves. The draftsman's initials are misprinted in the title as 'W. R. H.' He also made some perspective drawings of the church for the Benchers of the two Inns, about the year 1840. Our catalogue gives him four successive addresses, near Hanover, Berkeley, Manchester, and Dorset Squares respectively. Redgrave<sup>2</sup> tells us that he died at Bow, on the 22nd of February, 1855, aged fifty-three.

There was a Cambridge architect and writer on professional subjects named James Essex, who lived from 1723 to 1784.<sup>3</sup> Whether he was an ancestor of his namesake the Associate is not recorded.

Although it was chiefly as a figure painter that GEORGE CATTERMOLE attained his great distinction as a water-colour artist and Member of the Society, he had, before his appearance there, been best known as an architectural draftsman. It was with a single drawing of this class, a 'View of the West Front of Wells Cathedral,'

<sup>1</sup> The first, in 1824, was 'Interior of a Retort-house, recently erected for the South London Gas Company. Time, midnight.'

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of the English School.*

<sup>3</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary.*

that he made his first bow as an exhibitor in the Society's gallery (then at the Egyptian Hall), just after his election as Associate, on the 6th of April, 1822.

This was, no doubt, one of the illustrations he was then making for John Britton's large work on the *Cathedral Antiquities of Great Britain*. The part thereof which relates to Wells was published in 1824, and half of its twenty-four plates are from drawings by 'Cattermole' (presumably George). He had already contributed nineteen to the Canterbury<sup>1</sup> and seven to the Oxford parts, both issued in 1821; and was, in fact, his employer's 'righthand man'<sup>2</sup> in the carrying out of this undertaking. He had been placed with Britton at the age of fourteen, for the study of architecture. In this connexion with the industrious archæological purveyor and his works, he followed in the footsteps of an elder brother, Richard Cattermole, whose name as draftsman is upon many of the plates of the earlier parts of the above work, the first whereof was issued at about the time of George's coming to London.

The place whence they came was Dickleburgh, near Diss, in Norfolk, where the latter was born on the 10th of August, 1800. He was scarcely two years old when his mother died, and he remained the youngest of a family of six sons, and one daughter, who married while he was very young. The task of the child's training was thus left to the father, a man, it is said, of simple character, good taste, and a cultivated mind. Nothing further is recorded of George's bringing up; but he is credited with an early love of reading, and a youthful acquaintance with the works of Shakspeare and Sir Walter Scott, which he improved to some purpose in after life. He did not go to the University, like his brother, but was nevertheless a good Latin scholar, and wrote a correct and classic style.

The careers of Richard and George Cattermole were afterwards pursued along different, though not divergent, paths; the former becoming a writer on history and a teacher of men,<sup>3</sup> the latter taking

<sup>1</sup> In *My Life*, by T. Sidney Cooper, R.A., i. 39-42, a story is told of Cattermole's kindness in giving to that painter his first pencils and paper, when the two were both sketching the 'Great Church' in the Close at Canterbury; the former a young man seated within the garden railings of Dr. Pierce's house, with a dish of cherries before him; the latter, a poor lad perched on the coping outside, with nothing to draw on but his slate. Some twenty years after, they recognized each other as the parties to this transaction, when both had become prosperous artists.

<sup>2</sup> C. J. Mathews, in Dickens's *Life of C. J. Mathews*, i. 41.

<sup>3</sup> He was a Cambridge B.D., at one time incumbent of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, and at another vicar of Little Marlow, Bucks.



more exclusively to the palette and painting both, sometimes in illustration of his brother's books. But at first their employments and produce were so nearly identical that it may be well, for the sake of distinction, to specify here some of the elder brother's graphic works. *Richard* Cattermole was, as above stated, an exhibitor at the Oil and Water Colour Gallery in Spring Gardens. He had two views of Westminster Abbey there in 1814, and in the following year two church interiors peopled with worshippers at vespers and mass; and then, in 1818, two drawings from Hampton Court and Kensington, no doubt for Pyne's *Royal Residences*, published in 1819, for which work he drew nine of the plates. He also made some drawings of Lincoln Cathedral, in connexion, it is believed, with E. J. Willson's writings thereon. In the *Cathedral Antiquities* before mentioned, six plates of Salisbury<sup>1</sup> (1814), ten of Norwich<sup>2</sup> (1816), and one of Peterborough (1828), bear the name of 'R. Cattermole.'

As to brother *George*, the only previously exhibited works of his that we find recorded are two views of Peterborough Cathedral at the Royal Academy in 1819 and 1821. He had also furnished some illustrations to a *New Guide to Fonthill Abbey*, published in octavo in 1822; and there is, in Havell's *Views of Noblemen's and Gentlemen's Seats*, an aquatint of 'Chiswick House' dated 1823, after C. V. Fielding, from a sketch by G. Cattermole. There are also some engraved outlines by him from classic vases, the 'Portland' among them. After just putting in the aforesaid appearance in our gallery in 1822, he drops out of the catalogue until 1829. In the interval he worked for Britton, his name appearing on a plate or two in the *Public Buildings of London*, 1825-28, in the production of which the indefatigable book-maker had secured the aid of Pugin and his assistants as above stated. But there are no more plates of his in the 'Cathedrals,' except one of Peterborough in 1828.

His art had, however, been pursuing a new line at Somerset House, where he exhibited in 1826 an historical picture of 'King Henry II. discovering the Relics of King Arthur in Glastonbury Abbey' (it accompanied two other works, one a 'View near Salisbury,' the other 'A Lighthouse—composition'); and in 1827 an equally ambitious subject, the 'Trial of Queen Catherine.' This was the last work that he exhibited at the Royal Academy. He had also two pictures at

<sup>1</sup> Two woodcuts are also stated in the list to be drawn by 'Cattermole.'

<sup>2</sup> Ottley and others assert that G. Cattermole illustrated the Norwich.

the British Institution. When, after a re-election on the 9th of February, 1829, he made a fresh start as again an Associate of the Society, it was with aspirations directed to these higher flights. The titles of his nineteen works in the three years 1829-31 show that he at once entered upon the range of subjects in the treatment whereof he afterwards made for himself so distinguished a position. Among his first year's exhibits is 'Saul—a sketch.' Then in 1830 we have 'Comrades free, carousing after Victory,' 'The Captain's Story,' &c., and the Trial Scene from the *Merchant of Venice*. In 1831, there are 'The Castle surprised,' 'The Guard Room,' and others. In all of these the interest evidently depends on human character and dramatic situation, with a touch of the romance of a bygone age. And the few architectural subjects are no longer severe Cathedral fronts, but interiors of a more picturesque kind such as views in 'Haddon Hall,' or 'Compositions' merely. In 1830, according to Ottley, 'he travelled into Scotland for the purpose of making sketches of localities mentioned in the writings of Scott. Many of these have been published in various forms, and a large number of them are widely known as Illustrations of the *Waverley Novels*.'<sup>1</sup>

As Cattermole's chief works belong to the next twenty years, during which he was a conspicuous exhibitor at the Water-Colour Society, a more particular account of his art is reserved for a future chapter.

The year 1825 was marked by an event worthy of being coupled with De Wint's return, namely the coming of JOHN SELL COTMAN, a painter of great distinction. His name is known to readers of an earlier part of this history, wherein are recounted some of the acts of his more youthful career; his artist comradeship with Girtin at Dr. Monro's, and in the social brotherhood of the Sketching Club; and how he furnished Jane Porter with an incident of romance. Cotman was born on the 11th of June, 1782, and therefore but nineteen when Girtin died, and nearly forty-three when elected an Associate of our Society, on the 21st of March, 1825. His father was a well-to-do silk mercer and draper in Cockey Lane, Norwich; to which business young Cotman, after passing through his course of education at the Free Grammar School, would have been brought up, had he not preferred the following of art. Mr. Cotman had a suburban residence at Thorpe, in a garden overlooking the river, a

<sup>1</sup> *Dictionary of Recent and Living Painters &c.* (1876).

very pretty place which had much influence in the forming of his son's taste. But it could not furnish every requisite to an artist's training, even with the added opportunities afforded by trips to Cromer, where he gained his early impressions of things maritime ; so when his path in life was settled, the young man went to London to study and to try his luck.

He had not been there long when he appeared as an exhibitor at the Royal Academy. In the Catalogue for 1800 we find six works under his name, one a view of Harlech Castle, the rest rustic buildings and a church, all in Surrey. In the same year the Society of Arts awarded him the Honorary Palette for a drawing. It appears that the promising young draftsman's talent for architectural subjects did not escape the watchful eye of John Britton, for we find a print engraved after a drawing by him, and dated 1803, in the fourth volume of the *Beauties of England and Wales*, the subject being 'Gateway to Shute House, Devonshire.' He continued to exhibit at Somerset House till 1806, from two to seven works a year, comprising views of castles, abbeys, and picturesque subjects in North Wales, Yorkshire, Durham, and other counties. These drawings were the result of sketching excursions in various parts of the country, the greater part of the time so employed being spent in Yorkshire, where he acquired a warm and valuable friend in Mr. Francis Cholmely of Brandsby, by whose family he was hospitably entertained.

In the mean time Girtin had died, and the Society of Painters in Water-Colours had been founded. There is a weird black-and-white sketch by Cotman in the collection of Mr. James Reeve of Norwich, which seems to form a link between the art-career which had just closed and the school that was blossoming forth among Girtin's disciples. It is a treatment of a given subject, a quotation from Ossian : 'The Moon looks abroad from her cloud—The grey-skirted mist is near—The Dwelling of Ghosts.' It is endorsed as follows : 'Wednesday, March 23<sup>d</sup>, 1803. J. S. Cotman, Pres<sup>t</sup> ; J. Varley, T. Webster, Neil, Hayward,<sup>1</sup> P. S. Munn ; visitor D. Munn.' It cannot be doubted that we have here a further trace of Girtin's sketching club, which had either survived his death or been started afresh, and now included within it two at least of the early Members of the unborn Water-Colour Society.<sup>2</sup> Cotman was, it is presumed, the president for the evening, and in that right retained the drawings made.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Reeve has also Hayward's drawing of the same subject.

<sup>2</sup> Varley and Munn.



In 1806 Cotman returned to his native Norwich, there to remain for some years. He now established himself in a house in Luckett's Court, Wymer Street, where he proposed to open a 'school for drawing and design,' and hold an exhibition of his works. But an opportunity had arisen which gave them a wider publicity. The series of annual exhibitions of the *Norwich Society of Artists* began, like those of our own Society, in 1805, and had been established during young Cotman's absence in London. Their originator was John Crome, who, two years before, when our Society was also in embryo, had gathered together a little group of disciples in his native place, and laid the foundations of the school of landscape of which he is the acknowledged head.

Cotman cannot properly be called a pupil of Crome's; though in some phases of his art there is too much in common with that of the older painter to leave room for doubt as to the influence of that admirable artist. It appears from the above dates that he must have exercised such influence more as a companion than as a teacher. We find Cotman installed in 1807 as secretary of the new society, he having only returned to Norwich in the preceding year; and in the next he is an exhibitor there of as many as sixty-seven works. Some of these were portraits, and he even went so far at this time as to describe himself in the catalogue as a portrait painter. His practice in this branch of art was, indeed, soon superseded by landscape. But there exist a few examples of his likenesses, mostly profiles. An early one, in pencil, of his friend Francis Cholmeley, which he gave to the sitter on July the 5th, 1804, belongs to Mr. Reeve, of Norwich; half a dozen of later dates were afterwards etched by Mrs. Dawson Turner;<sup>1</sup> and there is at the British Museum a striking portrait by him of John Crome, three-quarters-face, of which the head is in water-colours.

On the 6th of January, 1809, Cotman was married to Miss Ann Miles, daughter of a farmer of Felbrigg, near Cromer. He continued to reside at Norwich for a few years longer, exhibiting his works there at the Society of Artists, of which he became President in 1811, and making topographic drawings in Norfolk for published series shortly to be mentioned. He also obtained an increasing number of pupils, and instituted a plan of circulating a set of his drawings, like the books in a lending library, at a guinea quarterly subscription, for

<sup>1</sup> In *One Hundred Etchings*, privately printed. Among them are portraits of Dr. (afterwards Sir William) Hooker, the botanist, and George P. Bidder, the engineer, when known only as the 'Calculating Boy.'

students to copy, he himself giving the subscribers some practical instructions for doing so, when he delivered the drawings to them.<sup>1</sup>

At this time the sphere of his industry was chiefly limited to his native county ; but there are two characteristic plates of the exterior of a half-timbered house, 'Moreton Hall, in Cheshire,' engraved from his drawings, in the second volume of Britton's *Architectural Antiquities*, which was published in 1809. And in 1810, as we have seen, he joined the shortlived society of the 'Associated Artists ;' but he was not an exhibitor in Bond Street for more than that one season, and his name was withdrawn after the next.

In addition to drawing in black and white, and painting in water-colours and also in oil, he now took the etching point in hand, and transferred some of his architectural studies to copper, displaying in his practice in this branch a spirit and freedom, an accuracy of touch, and an artistic judgment in treating his subject, that have rarely been equalled in works of their kind. His first publication was issued in parts, by subscription, in 1810-11, and contained twenty-four folio *Etchings by John Sell Cotman*. The complete volume, dated 1811, is published by Boydell, Colnaghi, and others, and dedicated to Sir H. E. Englefield, Bart., whom the author speaks of as his lifelong patron. These plates comprise studies from ruined abbeys and churches in Yorkshire and other counties, some of them doorways ; with a few picturesque cottages and houses, and one study of trees in Duncombe Park.

In 1812, having now the prospect of a family to support, and being induced by the promise of more pupils, and the powerful friendship of Mr. Dawson Turner, well known as an eminent antiquary (and botanist), who resided at Yarmouth, he removed to Southtown, near that place, and began a residence there which lasted until 1823. During this period the friend just mentioned was not only a patron, but a literary fellow-worker ; and his wife and daughters did justice to Cotman's teaching by ably reproducing his designs in the form of illustrative etchings. Four of the Misses Turner were among Cotman's pupils, namely Elizabeth (afterwards Lady Palgrave), Harriet (Mrs. Gunn), Hannah Sarah (Mrs. Brightman), and Miss M. A. Turner. 'While they copied his sketches,' writes their father, 'and listened to the tale of his discoveries, they could not but imbibe a portion of his

<sup>1</sup> Many of Cotman's drawings are numbered in the corner, probably for registration under this system.

enthusiasm.'<sup>1</sup> At Yarmouth he perfected himself in marine painting, in which branch he became as distinguished as in architecture. He made himself master of the technicalities of shipping, and had models of various kinds of craft constructed to study from.

This was also the period during which he produced his great series of Norfolk etchings. The most important set comprises sixty plates, which were published at Norwich in ten numbers from 1812 to 1818, with the title *Specimens of the Architectural Antiquities of Norfolk*, and (according to the prospectus) originally intended for binding up with Blomefield's *Norfolk* or Lysons's *Magna Britannia*. These, with their short descriptive notices, were then collected into a folio volume and issued in that form by Longman & Co., under the title, *A Series of Etchings Illustrative of the Architectural Antiquities of Norfolk*, with the date 1818. The subjects are classified as fourteen Monastic, thirty Ecclesiastical, and sixteen Military, Civil and Domestic. These plates, and others which followed, exhibit some of the finest qualities of Cotman's work in black and white, a rare power of combining architectural accuracy with pictorial effect, and largeness of treatment with truthful suggestion of detail. Some of his force of effect may have been derived from a study of Piranesi, of whose etchings he was a great admirer; but on these, as on all other works of his hand, he set an unmistakable stamp of originality. Contemporary in part with the Norfolk Antiquities was a set of '*Engravings of the Sepulchral Brasses of Norfolk and Suffolk* by John Sell Cotman.' Those of Norfolk were given alone in the first edition, dated 1819, the Suffolk series of forty-seven plates being afterwards added. Dates from 1814 to 1818 are on the plates, which when complete (with a few addenda in the second edition in two vols. 1839) are nearly 170 in number. These are admirably executed, but the subjects do not admit of picturesque treatment. Another series of fifty plates dated 1816-1818 form a small folio entitled, '*Specimens of Norman and Gothic Architecture in the County of Norfolk*, by J. S. Cotman.' These are more purely architectural than the 'Antiquities.' Many are of doorways, some of monuments. They are said to have been circulated among the artist's friends and patrons without being regularly published. Ten more folio, or large quarto, plates were published at Yarmouth in 1819 with the title, '*Antiquities of St.*

<sup>1</sup> *Catalogue of Engravings &c. collected towards the illustration of the Topography of Norfolk*. Privately printed, 1839.



*Mary's Chapel at Stourbridge* near Cambridge, &c. &c., by John Sell Cotman.' Six are of the Chapel, two of Cambridge Castle, and two of entrances to Ely Cathedral. Twice at least during Cotman's residence at Yarmouth was his etching point called into requisition to record facts of the history of his own time. There exists a curious little privately printed quarto entitled, *A Narrative of the Great Festival at Yarmouth, on Tuesday, the 19th of April, 1814*. The occasion was the fall of Napoleon, and the festival consisted of a dinner of 8,000 persons on the quay, and divers entertainments, ending with the burning of a huge bonfire. To illustrate this account Cotman furnished an effective soft-ground etching (seven by ten and a half inches in size) of the last ceremony, together with a title-page, a plan of the dinner tables, and a plate of the front elevation of the 'Funeral Pile of the Buonapartean Dynasty.' The second occasion of a like service was in 1817, when the foundation stone of a Nelson column was laid at Yarmouth, and Cotman etched a large plate of the intended monument with groups of sailors and others about the base, and a background of smoke above which flags and the masts of ships appear as in action.

In the same year (1817) Cotman paid a visit to France in company with his friends Mr. and Mrs. Dawson Turner to prepare a joint work on the architecture of Normandy. Two more visits by Cotman alone followed, in 1818 and 1820, and the result was the publication of the '*Architectural Antiquities of Normandy*, represented in a series of 100 etchings, accompanied by historical and descriptive notices by Dawson Turner,' two vols. folio, 1822. The plates bear dates from 1819 to 1821. Some are purely architectural; in others the subjects are treated pictorially; a few, such as the Château Gaillard and the Castle of Tankerville, being more in the nature of general landscape. Thus the Norman sketches of Edridge, Prout and Cotman all belong to the same period of two or three years. Pugin's architectural visit to the same province came a little later.

These Normandy excursions were, it is believed, the only occasions on which Cotman crossed the British Channel. Other foreign views which occur among his later drawings were from sketches by pupils and friends. Many of Cotman's topographic and architectural drawings, both in Norfolk and in Normandy, were also reproduced by other hands. A local history entitled *Excursions in the County of Norfolk*, in two vols. 12mo, 1818-19, contains *inter alia* ninety-eight

small plates after his drawings (including the ornamental titles), made for the most part while he lived at Norwich. Many of these represent gentlemen's seats, some antiquities, and others more general views; and in all cases the composition is broad and effective, and the treatment full of character. Etchings after some of his drawings were made by two of the Misses Turner (one of them the future Lady Palgrave) to illustrate their father's *Account of a Tour in Normandy*, two vols. 8vo, 1820, which was published while Cotman's own larger plates of the same district were in progress.

With the above publications Cotman's labours as an architectural and topographic draftsman came to an end, and he thenceforth devoted himself more exclusively to painting. A growing family (he had by this time five children) now rendering it necessary for him to check a propensity to the unthrifty indulgence of a refined taste, and generally to retrench his expenses, he once more found it expedient to reside at Norwich, where he again became a large contributor to the gallery of the Society of Artists. In 1824 he had fifty-two works there, some being in oil. Among the drawings in that year were two, described as 'A Landscape, with the Fable of the Judgment of Midas, and a view of Whitby, Yorkshire, part of a series of designs intended to illustrate a work now publishing on landscape composition.' Whether this work took any definite shape at the time is more than doubtful; but both the subjects mentioned are contained in a collection of soft-ground etchings issued many years after, which will have to be described in a subsequent page. It is with his work in colour that we are now chiefly concerned.

During the period of his second professional residence at Norwich a perceptible change took place in the aims and character of Cotman's art, which separates his works into two more or less definite divisions. Up to that time he had been more engrossed with the concrete subject of representation, and had employed the devices of artistic treatment to impart its proper character, or to dress it in its own most taking garb. He was in short a topographer of the higher class. Henceforth he sought rather to embellish with foreign accessories, or even to idealize his subject, with more regard to beauty than to literal truth. The careers of other artists have passed through the same shifting phases, in the like succession, none perhaps affording a closer parallel than that of the great Turner. In Cotman's as in his, the contrast is specially marked in the adoption of a new and more conventional

scheme of colour. The work of the earlier time, strongly suggestive of his old friend Girtin, and sometimes of De Wint, possessed the sober truthfulness and quiet depth of tone which characterize their drawings. That of his later abounds in bright contrasts, and harmonies of richer hue, and revels in a fiercer sun. At all times, however, from the earliest to the latest, his composition of forms and disposal of light and shade were carefully considered, and of the essence of his art.<sup>1</sup> When Cotman joined the Water-Colour Society as an Associate, he had fairly entered upon his second style, and was near its zenith.

It appears from some correspondence with members of the Turner family, quoted in the introductory memoir (to which this compilation is largely indebted for facts) to the Catalogue of the Norwich Art Circle Exhibition of Cotman's drawings in 1888, that his candidature was in some measure owing to the recommendation of Charles Wild, then the Treasurer, who expressed to Mrs. Palgrave an earnest desire that Cotman's drawings should have the advantage of exhibition in the Society's gallery, and assured her that in the case of an artist whose talent was so well known, it would be unnecessary to send specimens for approval. They would, he said, be 'proud to admit him,' and there was '*no expense*.' So on the 21st of March, 1825, he became one of the elect.

With two exceptions of foreign landscapes from sketches by other hands, the twenty-one drawings which Cotman exhibited during the eleven years of Cristall's reign consist of architectural views, mostly in Normandy, and marine and maritime subjects on his own East-Anglian coast. One-third of the number belong to the last category, and represent a distinct branch of his multifold art. As a painter of the sea he belongs (more especially by virtue of his oil pictures) to the grander group that included Turner and Prout and Louis Francia, and superseded the old battle-painters, Serres and Pocock and Whitcombe; but he may in some sort be regarded also as a connecting link with a new school soon to arise and become conspicuous in some of the coming Members<sup>2</sup> of the Water-Colour Society.

The old Norwich Society came to an end in the very year (1825)

<sup>1</sup> It was his practice when sketching to make a preliminary study, on any scrap of paper which was at hand, of the general disposition of his subject and of the light and shade in which he designed to place it. These small rough pencil studies he used to call his 'effects.' Several of them were preserved by his pupil Miss M. A. Turner, and Mr. J. H. Inglis Palgrave has one at least.

<sup>2</sup> Chambers, Bentley, Callow.



of Cotman's accession to that of Painters in Water-Colours; but a revival taking place in 1828 under the name of the 'Norfolk and Suffolk Institution for the Promotion of Fine Arts,' he supported it with contributions, while at the same time he was sending drawings to Pall Mall East. Some were exhibited at both galleries.

All this time Cotman was, professionally speaking, an unsuccessful man. His pictures did not sell, and, as is but too plainly shown by correspondence printed in the Norwich Art Circle catalogue, he being of a desponding turn, suffered in consequence dreadfully from depression. But he struggled on at his work, and exerted himself in the general interests of art in his native town; and brought up two sons to what he bitterly called 'the same miserable profession' as his own.

## CHAPTER V

## LATER PICTURESQUE LANDSCAPE

Biographies of New Associates, to 1831 or death—*H. Gastineau—J. D. Harding—W. J. Bennett* (retired 1826)—*W. A. Nesfield—S. Jackson—J. Whichelo—S. Austin* (died 1834)—*G. Pyne—J. Byrne—W. Evans* (of Eton)—*T. Fielding* (died 1837).

THE reign of Cristall was further signalized by a blossoming forth of the new generation of landscape painters, who had no personal share in the great development of water-colour art from 'drawing' into 'painting,' but had received the doctrines and principles of the school, handed down from the founders as matters of tradition, and accepted them as a common law, against which there was as yet no thought of rebellion. These painters will now be noticed, for the most part, in the order of their first appearance in the gallery.

HENRY GASTINEAU, one of the many of our artists whose names imply a French and suggest a Huguenot origin, was in his thirty-first year in the month of February 1821, when he was made an Associate of the Society. In point of age, therefore, he might have been named as the youngest of the group of landscapists which comprised Copley Fielding, Robson, and Turner of Oxford; although, until the last three years at Spring Gardens, his drawings had not been shown in association with theirs.

In his youth he was 'apprenticed to an engraver,' but soon quitted that employment, and commenced painting in oils.<sup>1</sup> The earliest known appearance of his name in print is as the draftsman of a plate in the *Beauties of England and Wales*, vol. xiv. p. 99, of 'Fountain Cottage, Camberwell Grove,' published 1811. He became a student at the Royal Academy, and in 1812 began to exhibit works at Somerset House. Then he took to water-colours. He had, as already stated, four drawings at the exhibition of 'Paintings in Water-Colours' in New Bond Street in 1815. And it was probably in the

<sup>1</sup> *Times*, 26 Jan. 1876.

same medium that the sixteen landscapes were executed which he sent to the 'Oil and Water Colour' in 1818-20. Their class of subjects favours this presumption, as they are, for the most part, purely topographical. A few are from Yorkshire. About half a dozen appear to have been designed for a series of small prints to illustrate a 12mo book called *Excursions in the County of Kent*, published in 1822. These little views evince, by a well-balanced composition, the thoughtfulness and judgment that characterize the school to which the artist belonged. He contributed eighteen to the work named. In 1821-23 he sent his full eight drawings a year as an Associate, and on the 9th of June, 1823, was elected a Member. He then became a large exhibitor, showing an average of about twenty-five drawings in each season. His landscapes are chiefly stock picturesque subjects in England, Scotland, and Wales, with some from Switzerland and the Italian lakes in and after 1829.

He lived at Camberwell, where in 1827 his address was changed from 1 Adelphi Terrace to Cold Harbour Lane, he having then built himself a house in which he resided during the rest of a long life and equally long connexion with the Water-Colour Society. Gastineau was much engaged with pupils, and had to work hard at his teaching, sometimes giving in one day a lesson at Highgate, and another at Sydenham, without the present facilities of locomotion. He used to prescribe a course of practice which led the learner gradually on through the use of one, two, and then three colours, to the full palette. He would veil his landscapes in very tender atmosphere, but his colouring, though agreeable, had a conventional sameness. He was particularly successful in moonlights, to which he gave a characteristic mellowness by means of preliminary washes of warm colour. He also excelled in waterfalls and wild scenery.

Besides the little work already mentioned, W. H. Ireland's *History of Kent*, four vols. 8vo, 1829-30, contains thirteen; John Tillotson's *Beauties of English Scenery*, six, and the same compiler's *Picturesque Scenery in Wales*, 4to, nineteen plates; and his *Album of Scottish Scenery*, one plate (Eglestone Abbey), from drawings by Gastineau.

JAMES DUFFIELD HARDING, who was elected an Associate on the 5th of July, 1820, and a Member on the 11th of June, 1821, was a landscape artist of distinction and originality, who had exhibited



with the Society during the last three years of its oil-and-water state of existence. He was to become a representative man, but the kind of art with which his name is chiefly associated was as yet but little developed. Harding was born at Deptford in 1797 or 1798, and came of artist parentage, his father having been a drawing master, who had learnt his business, in which he is said to have shown considerable talent, from Paul Sandby. Redgrave asserts that young Harding was articled to an attorney; but another account is more plausible, namely that, in accordance with his father's wish, he was from the first brought up to the profession they both followed. After being well grounded in perspective, he, at about the age of sixteen, received some sound elementary instruction in water-colour drawing in a course of ten or fifteen lessons from Samuel Prout, the benefit derived from whose teaching and advice he ever after acknowledged. His own aptitude was for some time doubtful, and his father complained of his lack of ideas. 'Let him draw till they come,' said Prout. And so he tried to do, for his pencil was never idle. But he had not yet learned to see with his own eyes, and evolved nothing but old cottages and crumbling walls in his master's manner. His mother sent him into Greenwich Park, hard by, to sketch the trees. And it is a curious fact that he who was to become the great exponent of tree drawing, and the founder of a school of foliage, was so bewildered in his first attempts, that they were nearly fatal to his hopes of becoming a painter. The idea of making an original artist of him being for the time abandoned, he was articled as an apprentice to John Pye,<sup>1</sup> with a view to his following the profession of a line engraver.

An anecdote referring to this period of his life, which he, in his last year, related to a friend,<sup>2</sup> evinces the sensitive earnestness of Harding's character. While puzzling over the difficulties of drawing, and in earnest pursuit of knowledge, he saw an artist sketching a group of trees in the park, and approached him to ask some questions; but the sketcher shut up his book in the young aspirant's face. The poor lad slunk way behind the Observatory to hide the tears which he could not restrain. There, however, he made a solemn vow that 'if ever it should please God to let him become acquainted with the secrets of Art, he would teach them to *everybody*.' How the vow was fulfilled will appear in the sequel.

<sup>1</sup> Or, according to the *Art Journal* 1856, p. 370, Charles Pye, his elder brother.

<sup>2</sup> William Walker, writer of a memoir in the *Portfolio*, February 1880, pp. 29-33, from which other of the facts of this notice are taken.

Young Harding remained with Pye a year only, for before that time elapsed he had tried again to sketch from nature, with better success ; encouraged, as he said, by the good counsels of his mother, who sought to excite his imagination, and foster in him a love of poetry. Moreover, he applied his own mind to the work, and formed for himself a theory of drawing trees, based on observation of their laws of growth. Another source to which he (like David Cox before him) attributed much of his perception of the essential qualities of art, was the *Liber Studiorum* of Turner, to which series of prints he gave much attention at this time. It can scarcely be doubted that any intercourse with John Pye would have helped to inspire him with reverence for the teaching contained in that great work.

Some of Harding's earliest professional practice was the making of perspective drawings for architects, and he is said to have learned much while employed on work of this kind in the office of P. F. Robinson,<sup>1</sup> the designer of the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, the very building in which Harding first exhibited with our Society as an Associate. At the same time he applied himself to a diligent study of James Malton's book on perspective entitled 'The Young Painter's Maulstick.'

Harding began to exhibit landscape drawings at the Royal Academy as early as the year 1811, and did so at the rate of one per annum till 1818. Most were views of buildings in Kent and Sussex. In 1815 he had five drawings in the exhibition in New Bond Street.<sup>2</sup> In 1816 or 1818 he gained the silver medal of the Society of Arts for an original landscape. His nine drawings at Spring Gardens in 1818-20 were, with one exception, of subjects in England and Wales, beginning with a view of Greenwich Hospital at sunset. The exception was a 'View of the Valley of Frutegen, Switzerland, from a sketch by Major Cockburn' (1819). The sketcher was an artillery officer,<sup>3</sup> who published a number of works on foreign scenery illustrated from drawings made by him on the spot, with the aid (it is said) of the camera lucida. He was then preparing a set of sixty-two views of 'Swiss Scenery,' which were engraved in line and published in a quarto volume in 1820. Harding's drawing is not among these ; but in the course of the next two years he made copies (or translations)

<sup>1</sup> A drawing of the conservatory at Cassiobury, from Robinson's designs, was among Harding's exhibits at Spring Gardens in 1819 ; and in 1826 there is a view of Woburn Abbey for his former master's book, the new *Vitruvius Britannicus*. At a later date he lithographed (as mentioned below) many of the same architect's designs.

<sup>2</sup> See *supra*, p. 289, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> James (Pattison) Cockburn, afterwards Major-General.

upon stone of fifty (save one<sup>1</sup>) of the same amateur's sketches, which were published in folio in 1822 by Rodwell and Martin, with the title, *Views to illustrate the Route of the Simplon*. These prints are only remarkable as affording examples of an early stage of lithographic art, from the hand of one who was to become its most skilful practitioner. They evince a timidity of handling in curious contrast to the freedom of the master's mature work, and exemplify, in the treatment of the foliage and texture of the foregrounds, some of the defects against which he afterwards warned beginners, in a practical treatise on 'Elementary Art.'

Harding was not long, however, in acquiring command of the new material, and soon learned to draw on stone or paper with equal spirit and dexterity. His original work in lithography at this period of his career bears but a small proportion to what he did at a later time. He contributed some views in Kent, executed in this manner, to a folio set of prints which was to have been extended to other counties, under the title *Britannia Delineata*. They were 'Printed by C. Hullmandel for Rodwell & Martin,<sup>2</sup> New Bond Street, 1822.' The work contains twenty-six lithographs,<sup>3</sup> whereof ten (including the title vignette) are entirely by Harding. In some of these (e.g. 'Greenwich Hospital' and 'Dover from the top of Shakspeare's Cliff—Effect of Sunrise') the gradations of atmosphere are admirably expressed. Many drawing copies by him on stone are also said to have been published by the same firm, Rodwell & Martin.<sup>4</sup>

But for many years Harding was much less employed in thus reproducing his own sketches for the press, than in translating and multiplying the designs of others by the same process. As a lithographic draftsman he was then performing some of the functions of the engraver, without actually taking to the profession in which he had served his apprenticeship. In some *Views in Egypt and Nubia* (published by Murray), after original drawings by a Roman artist named Bossi (made in the winter of 1820–21 under the direction of Edward J. Cooper, Esq.), he shows a decided advance in clean workmanship and freedom of hand since his early copying from Major Cockburn. This book contains some thirty full-page lithographs (besides smaller ones) printed by C. Hullmandel, whereof about

<sup>1</sup> Drawn by C. Hullmandel.

<sup>2</sup> In the imprints of some the name 'R. Ackermann' is given as the publisher.

<sup>3</sup> Three are by Prout, two by Westall, and the rest by Hullmandel. Harding's and Prout's are by far the best.

<sup>4</sup> *Portfolio, ubi supra.*



half are landscape subjects done by Harding, and the remainder, some of figures and costume, are by W. Westall. The prints bear dates from June 1824 to September 1825. In 1825 two forthcoming series of lithographs by Harding are announced by advertisement in the Society's catalogue. One is *Specimens of the British School of Painting*, being reproductions of 'choice pictures by our native artists.' It was to come out in quarterly numbers, each containing four subjects. The other is *Views in Rome*, from sketches by Major Cockburn. This was to comprise forty subjects in ten bi-monthly parts. How far, if at all, these schemes were carried into effect has not been discovered. The date 1826 is upon some of a series of 'Nine Lithographic *Views of the Cottages comprising Blaise Hamlet*, . . . situated in the grounds of Blaise Castle near Bristol, the seat of I. S. Harford, Esq. . . . drawn on stone by I. D. Harding, and sketched from nature by H. O'Neil,' which were published at Bristol, and also sold by Colnaghi & Co. about this time. In 1828 twenty-five folio *Views of Pompeii*, drawn on stone by J. D. Harding after drawings by William Light, Esq. (late on the Duke of Wellington's staff in the Peninsula), were published by James Carpenter & Son, of Old Bond Street. This Mr. Carpenter was a picture dealer, who possessed a collection of fine works by Bonington;<sup>1</sup> and Harding's pencil was next most happily employed in drawing upon stone *A Series of Subjects from the Works of R. P. Bonington*, which were published by the same firm, with a portrait of that painter, also lithographed by Harding, from a picture by Mrs. Margaret Carpenter. The series consists of twenty subjects besides a vignette on the title-page, the dates being from 1 Aug. 1829 to 1 Sept. 1830. The work was issued in four parts, in large quarto. In 1830 appeared *Picturesque Views of the Antiquities of Ireland*, on stone by Harding, from sketches by Robert O'Callaghan Newenham, in two volumes 4to. His *Gothic Ornaments*, after Pugin, published 1828-31, has already been mentioned. 'The *Costumes of the French Pyrenees*, drawn on stone by J. D. Harding from original sketches by J. Johnston, Esq.' are a set of coloured lithographs, also published by Carpenter & Son in a quarto volume dated 1832, which further show our draftsman's versatility. A few of the stones are dated 1830.

<sup>1</sup> See Watkins's *Life of George Chambers*, p. 38. See also *My Life*, by T. Sidney Cooper, R.A., ii. 221, 230, where Harding, whom the author first met at Carpenter's, is described as 'a cheerful, indeed a delightful man, full of information and very entertaining.'

But Harding was seen at his best, as a draftsman on stone, when the design and execution were both his own. If Lithography be entitled to be classed under the head of Engraving, there never was an artist to whom the name of *peintre-graveur* could be more appropriately applied than J. D. Harding. The most and best of his *original* work on stone was executed after the period now under review. An important part of it was expressly designed for educational purposes, to convey to students a knowledge of the secrets of art, and train them to its practice, according to his early vow in the park at Greenwich. In pursuing this vocation he developed a style of his own; which he not only set up as a model of imitation (that was largely followed), but expounded in practical treatises to a host of disciples. It will be a more fitting time to expatiate on that style when we are called upon to notice his own analysis of the principles on which he worked.

Harding did not send more than thirty-eight water-colour drawings to our gallery between 1821 and 1831, and eight of these were professedly made from sketches by other hands: one of Caen by Edridge, one in Spain by E. H. Locker, Esq., and six by the Duchess of Rutland of views on the Rhine and Moselle. But he had already begun to travel and sketch for himself. In October 1824 we hear of him in Italy, for Uwins writes from Genoa on the 18th of that month that he has just met him at Susa, apparently accompanied by Hullmandel the lithographer (to whom he is said to have been introduced by Valentine Bartholomew<sup>1</sup>), with another 'English artist.' And beginning with the next year we find about half a dozen drawings from the valley of Aosta and two from Monaco by him in the gallery at Pall Mall East. The year 1830 is, however, assigned to a visit to Italy, during which he is said to have made sketches upon coloured paper, which, being much admired on his return to England, brought that material into vogue as the more efficient means of producing an effect.<sup>2</sup> There can be little doubt that he was at that time collecting materials for a series of illustrations of foreign scenery, in which he worthily succeeded Prout, in the *Landscape Annuals* for 1832 and the two following years.

In 1829-31 lines from Byron afford almost the only themes of his exhibited drawings; the last being an illustration of Childe Harold's day-dream of Italy, the 'garden of the world,' and that in 1830 being

<sup>1</sup> See account of Bartholomew, *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> *The Reader*, 12 Dec. 1863.

doubtless the original of a plate engraved by J. T. Willmore, in the *Keepsake* for 1832, of 'Byron's Dream.'

Of the artist who was elected an Associate on the 5th of July, 1820, along with Harding, Scott, and Walker, one can make but a shadowy record. The time and place of Bennett's birth are alike unknown. And his very name is variously registered. Generally it is entered in the catalogue as 'W. T.' Bennett, and but once as 'W. J.' A view of a 'Franciscan Convent on the Tagus' was exhibited at the Royal Academy by 'W. T. Bennett' as far back as 1807. Redgrave may, however, be right in calling him WILLIAM JAMES BENNETT (or *Bennet* as the surname is printed in the second edition of the 'Dictionary'). He had been a Member of the Associated Artists during the whole five years of the existence of that body, and was their Treasurer during the last two; and between 1808 and 1812 he exhibited in their gallery. The name 'W. J. Bennett' as engraver is on some of the aquatint plates published at this period; for example, in Nash's *Brighton Pavilion* and Nayler's *Coronation*.

This Associate exhibitor merely fluttered about the Society for some half-dozen years, during which time he hailed from four different places of address. He showed seven works only between 1819 and 1825. There were views near Naples, and two from the Straits of Gibraltar. In 1822 he sent no drawing; but made excuses, which were accepted. In 1826 his name disappears from the catalogue, and nothing is recorded of him after that date. But a note by Dr. Percy in his MS. Catalogue, now at the British Museum, seems to throw some light upon the fact of Bennett's disappearance. He there relates, on the authority of the late Mr. Hogarth the dealer, that a brother-in-law of Frederick Nash was 'an artist, an aquatinter, a very clever man named William Bennet, but who unfortunately in consequence of Fauntleroy's failures followed Fauntleroy's example, and was obliged to leave this country for America, and became President of the New York Academy.' Henry Fauntleroy, the banker, was executed for forgery in 1824.

The position held among contemporary artists by FRANCIS OLIVER FINCH, 'a painter, a poet, a musician, a humourist, and a gentle and kindly spirit' (as his friend the late Sir Henry Cole described him),<sup>1</sup> was in some respects unique. If not to him, yet to

<sup>1</sup> See *Memorials of F. O. Finch*, by his widow, p. 36.



some of his comrades in art, who belonged to the figure school, but with whom he sympathized in feeling, has been attributed the re-kindling of a poetic spark, well-nigh extinct before, which the more potent breath of later men has warmed into effulgence. He may thus, indeed, have lent his aid to forge a link between past schools and one of very modern times. But in his own practice he stands alone, representing a survival, wherein much of the life and beauty of the earlier landscape was retained down to a period when no one cared to revive its lapsed traditions. When he ceased to paint, Finch was acknowledged as 'the last representative of the old school of landscape painting in water-colours.'<sup>1</sup> That time, however, had not arrived when Finch was elected an Associate of our Society, on the 11th of February, 1822. He was then but nineteen years of age, and was to adorn the gallery in Pall Mall East with classic compositions and scenes of tender moonlight, for forty years, during which great changes came o'er the spirit of our dreams of art.

Finch was London-born, and in great part London-bred ; but his soul was not confined by bricks and mortar. His names of 'Francis' and 'Oliver' were derived from those of his father and mother respectively. The father was a young merchant, who had not long set up his business, in Friday Street, Cheapside, when, after surviving both his parents, he was himself carried off in a rapid decline, within three years of his marriage, leaving but poorly provided for, to the care of its mother and her female relatives (for *her* father was dead also), one weakly child, born prematurely on the 22nd of November, 1802. That the home influence of affectionate women, thus early exercised, was continued during the whole of his blameless life, is a fact that well accords with the gentleness of character and pious disposition assigned by all who knew him to Francis Oliver Finch. On her husband's death, the widowed mother joined with a maiden sister in carrying on a 'lace and fancy business,' whereby, and by letting a part of the house they took for the purpose, they managed to support themselves, and with the aid of a third and married sister to nurture their little orphan. As he grew, it was deemed needful to his health to give him country air. So, after some elementary schooling in London (the only general education he ever got, except at home) he was sent to widow Oliver, his grandmother's, at Stone, near Aylesbury, where he gained strength, and learned to take pleasure in rural

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Palmer.

sports. There was a small library here consisting of the Bible, the Pilgrim's Progress, Robinson Crusoe, and the Arabian Nights, which he not only pored over with delight, but showed an inkling for art by trying to illustrate. It is related that on showing some of these attempts to a neighbour's good wife, she gave him the following advice, 'There's no good in makin' picturs, little Finchy; you'd better be a parson, and make sermons.' We shall see in the sequel that he did both, though neither as a parish priest nor a Royal Academician; and that he was well able to reconcile the two occupations. After making due allowance in accounts derived from doting relations, 'little Finchy' appears to have been a really attractive boy, of much more than ordinary intelligence; and it is not surprising that his mother could not find it in her heart to accept a pressing offer which was made her by a lady of rank to adopt him as a son. It was probably with greater reluctance that a presentation to Christ's Hospital, which he might have had when about seven years old, was also declined on the ground of his delicacy of health, and the chance thus allowed to go by of his receiving a classical education. But it happened, after all, that Mr. Finch had not left his son so nearly destitute as had been imagined. If his own estate was deficient, he had secured friends both willing and able to help the boy on in life. It was one of these (who had promised the dying father never to desert his child) that offered him this presentation, and who now, on learning the child's capabilities, gave him the means of becoming a practical artist. Under his advice and aided by his generosity, young Finch, in the year 1814 or 1815, was articled for three years to John Varley, with a premium of 200*l.*, and he remained his pupil for two additional years.

A fellow-pupil at Varley's, Mr. John Sharpe, afterwards a lifelong friend of Finch's, gives the following account of the lad, and his attainments at the time of his reception into the artistic household in Broad Street, Golden Square. 'He certainly possessed no ordinary mind, for although he was only then about twelve years of age, he could give a succinct account of Milton's "Paradise Lost," and repeat many beautiful passages from that poem. He was deep in Spenser's "Faerie Queen," explaining all the obsolete words with the greatest ease. He took great delight also in Ovid, Gray, Thomson, and last, though not least, Shakespeare.'<sup>1</sup> He would scarcely have learned all this at a public

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of F. O. Finch*, p. 324.

school. Among his fellow-students at Varley's at one time or another were Mulready, Linnell, Hunt, and his great friend and admirer Samuel Palmer of our Society. With Varley himself he was, as the writer just quoted tells us, 'a great favourite, as with the whole family ;' while by 'his intelligence, docility, unassuming manners, and aptitude for acquiring all sorts of knowledge,' he excited a lively interest among the distinguished artists and *savans* who frequented the house. Being thus brought within an atmosphere of science, he became fond of experiments, amusing himself by constructing air and fire balloons, and an electrical machine. He also began a practical study of music, and having a beautiful contralto voice and a taste inherited from his father, acquired a proficiency which made his singing a great source of attraction and admiration in after life.

Finch became an exhibitor at the Royal Academy when he was not more than fifteen. In 1817 and 1818 he sends 'A Study from Nature' and 'A Landscape Composition.' These, being hung in the 'Antique Academy,' were doubtless in water-colours ; but his third exhibit, a 'Composition,' in 1819, called 'A Land Storm,' being placed in the great room, may be thence inferred to have been an oil picture. 'When at Varley's,' he 'directed his attention more especially to the two Poussins and Domenichino as his guides in Art, and I have seen,' continues Mr. Sharpe, 'some very simple but pleasing drawings done at this period, I presume after them.'

Finch was an inmate at Varley's when his master removed to Conduit Street, and afterwards to Titchfield Street, and these are the young artist's addresses in the Academy catalogues. But his holidays were spent in the country, with his mother and two aunts ; both of the latter being now married, and their widow sister having bought and removed to a small freehold in Buckinghamshire, midway between their houses. Here the days were too short for his active enjoyment of them, and, as he used to relate, he and his cousins, in order to lengthen their hours of sport, made desperate attempts to rise with the lark, till the god Morpheus established his sway, and then they were all found asleep one day at noon.

In 1820, the year he left Varley's, Finch had nothing at the Academy. But his name appears in the catalogue of the Oil and Water Colour Society, with the address 26 Dartmouth Street, Westminster, 'an old-fashioned house,' to which he and his mother, who now became his careful housekeeper, had removed. His single



subject which was treated in oils is entitled 'Garmallon's Tomb,' as described by Ossian, rising among withered grass and rustling foliage to the murmur of a little fountain and whistlings of the breeze.<sup>1</sup> In 1821 he reappears at Somerset House, with a drawing of 'Loch Lomond and its Islands.' It must have been in the preceding year that he was enabled to visit Scotland by the same judicious benefactor who had helped to send him to Varley's. Except a trip to Paris more than thirty years after, this was the only occasion on which Finch travelled out of England. And within his native land his wanderings appear to have been very limited. Even to Edinburgh he went by sea.

He had not yet determined to confine himself to landscape. Possibly with the intention of entering as a Royal Academy student, he worked for a time in the life-school of the late Mr. Henry Sass. It is thought that he may also have attended Fuseli's lectures. Mr. Sharpe, before quoted, says that Finch had a refined perception of the human form, and that he used to design with great ability from Ovid and the Arabian Nights outlines after the manner of Flaxman, of whom he was a great admirer 'as well as of Fuseli;' and considers that with his 'wonderful power of imagination' he would have excelled in historical painting had he taken up that branch of art.<sup>2</sup> Of this, too, the excellence of the few figures introduced in his landscapes has been adduced in evidence. He did, in fact, at this early time, a little portrait painting; but, after admission to our Society, gave himself up entirely to landscape.

In 1822 we find him set up at a new address, 82 Great Titchfield Street, where he and his mother remained for the next fifteen years, during which time both his art and his habits of thought were still in process of development. Mr. Sharpe, who stayed with him at this time, when he was not more than twenty years of age, tells us that he had then learnt to play on the piano, and sang very delightfully. 'When he could not please himself at painting, he would run to the piano, and go back to his easel refreshed, and often in the dusk of the long summer evenings he would treat me with selections from Mozart, Haydn, Calcott, and others. His voice, though not loud, was very expressive, and at times he could throw great power into it.'<sup>3</sup>

Except that a fair proportion of his subjects are evidently results

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Finch quotes Mr. Jenkins's authority that this picture was not only 'in oil,' but 'the first he ever exhibited.' (*Memorials of F. O. Finch*, p. 40.) But he had, as we have seen, sent works to the Academy, one of which appears to have been in oil.

<sup>2</sup> *Memorials of F. O. Finch*, p. 325.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 326.

of his Scotch tour, there is little to show, beyond the evidence of his painting, which abounds in truthful representation, that he was ever an assiduous student of nature in the ordinary sense of country sketching out of doors. There are, it is true, in 1826 and 1828, nine views of Northwick Park (near Blockley in Worcestershire); but these were commissions from a patron, the second Lord Northwick, distinguished as a collector and connoisseur of works of art, by whom, and by other wealthy employers, Finch was kindly treated and hospitably received. By choice, indeed, our artist was anything but a topographer. Nor was he a traveller in search of 'subjects.' His works made no addition to the wearisome iteration of stock views of which critics were wont to complain. He drew a broad distinction between the imitative art, which he held to be merely the means to an end, and the '*fine art*,' wherein 'the appeal is never to the eye alone, but always through the eye to the mind.'<sup>1</sup> Thus, when no longer *in statu pupillari*, and left to his own resources as to his method of study, his converse with nature had for its object to strengthen imaginative power rather than to cultivate dexterity of hand. Joining a band of young enthusiasts like himself, who styled themselves a league of 'Poetry and Sentiment,' he passed his evenings with them in sweet discourse with dramatists and poets, Shakspeare, Spenser, and Milton among the old, and among the modern Keats. The last had been a favourite with Finch from boyhood, at a time when Keats had few admirers. It is related that once in these early days he was hanging with longing eyes before a plaster cast of that poet's head in a shop window, when the proprietor, observing his adoration, came out and kindly made him a present of it.

Sometimes Finch and his companions would sally forth from their homes to spend the livelong night a-wandering in the country, which was then more readily accessible on foot than it is now to dwellers in town. There they would mark the song of philomel, or gaze with rapture when

With brightness soft . . . the summer moon  
Rides thinly veiled within a fleecy cloud,  
Spread o'er the darkened azure . . .

and anon look upward and behold

the waning stars  
Pale in the morning twilight.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Address on the Fine Arts.* (*Memorials*, p. 235.)

<sup>2</sup> 'An Artist's Dream,' by F. O. F. (*Memorials and Reminiscences*, p. 300.)

On these occasions, too, they found means of exercising a dramatic and lyric taste. A 'black lane' near Shoreham in Kent,<sup>1</sup> 'flanked with great old beech trees'—'hedged in by roots in wild contortions'—and where a murder had been committed, was their stage for enacting witch scenes from *Macbeth*, and singing the choruses by Lock. In 'certain lanes in the neighbourhood of Dulwich and Sydenham . . . one of the group would lie down in the moonshine to represent a murdered traveller, with a cloaked assassin standing over him; and once at night in the hollow of a Kentish lane, when in a little improvised drama a spectre was seen to rise up out of the dust and seize and carry off a victim, the spectre' is said to have been 'so finely acted as for the moment to terrify its prey.' No wonder that the country folk were alarmed at the visits of these night errants (whom they called '*extollagers*,'<sup>2</sup> whatever that may mean), or that, among other adventures, they, on one occasion when in a rural churchyard, were taken for a party of body-snatchers.

One of the members of this romantic brotherhood was the late Edward Calvert, a little known artist, who exhibited only a few finished pictures, but showed in his sketches and studies a refined sense of beauty that seems to foreshadow in some of its qualities the poetic style of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Another was the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, prebendary of St. Paul's, and youngest son of the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

There was another bond of sympathy which united Finch with his friend Calvert, namely their common reverence for William Blake. 'As a boy,' writes Gilchrist, 'he had heard again and again of Blake from John Varley, . . . and his imagination had been much excited by what he had heard. For once, expectation was fulfilled. In Mr. Finch's own felicitous words, Blake "struck him as *a new kind of man*, wholly original, and in all things."<sup>3</sup> With his fellow-pupils Linnell, and Samuel Palmer, Finch was one of the young artists who sat at the poet-painter's feet in these closing years of his life. It was barely two months before Blake died that Finch was received, as a full Member, into the Society of Painters in Water-Colours, namely on the 4th of June, 1827.

<sup>1</sup> See account of Samuel Palmer, *infra*.

<sup>2</sup> Probably a corruption of *astrologer*. Samuel Palmer, in a letter to Mr. Jenkins, explains 'extollager' as one 'who went by the stars, a strange gentleman whose sketching stool, unseen before in those parts, was mistaken for a celestial instrument.'

<sup>3</sup> *Life of Blake*, i. 299.



An event occurred about this time which settled his habits of life, and gave a special turn to all his future thoughts. As he was one day pursuing some professional studies in the library of the British Museum, he happened to come upon a volume of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, which not only set at rest some religious doubts whereby he had been perplexed, but induced him to become an active member of the 'New Church,' which looked upon that writer as an inspired prophet. Finch's musical attainments gave him a place in the choir of the congregation that worshipped in Cross Street, Hatton Garden. And there he saw and admired the lady who was afterwards to become his wife. Her father, Mr. McNab, resided in St. Martin's Lane, where he was in the habit of holding, at regular intervals, music meetings, to which our artist and his voice were alike always welcome. His union with Miss Elize McNab was not, however, to take place till many years after; for his professional income was not as yet sufficient to enable him to marry, or even, as he honourably thought, to justify him in declaring his affection. So he set to work manfully, not to paint 'pot-boilers' for the market, as some might have done, but to aid his finances by the irksome task, to him, of giving lessons in drawing.

Thus his exhibited works were not very numerous in these his bachelor days. He sent forty to the gallery during Cristall's presidency, besides which he had fourteen at the Academy between 1817 and 1832. Most were 'Landscape Compositions,' without identification of place. During this period he had, writes Mr. Sharpe, been 'following his early love, the antique, but improving,' the writer thought, 'in colour and tone, acquiring some of the softness and harmony of Claude.'<sup>1</sup> The analysis of his mature painting must be reserved to accompany some account of his married life, which followed shortly after, and of his poetical and other writings, which seem to belong to a later period than that now under consideration.

Three more landscape painters were elected Associates in a batch on the 10th of February, 1823 (along with the architect Essex), all of whom—beginning thus with the opening of the new gallery—continued to exhibit annually for a long series of years. These were *W. A. Nesfield*, *S. Jackson*, and *J. Whichelo*, the first of whom soon became a Member, the other two always remaining Associates only.

<sup>1</sup> *Memorials of F. O. Finch*, p. 327.

Art had not been the original calling of WILLIAM ANDREWS NESFIELD. He was a half-pay lieutenant in the army, about thirty years of age when he joined the Society, and had been in active service in one hemisphere or the other during all his military career. He was born in 1793 in the county of Durham, his father being Rector of Brancepeth, from the park and castle whereof some of his early drawings are taken.<sup>1</sup> After receiving a liberal education at Winchester and Trinity College, Cambridge, he went in 1809 to Woolwich as a cadet, and obtained a commission in the old 95th, now the Rifle Brigade. The regiment was in the Peninsula. There he joined it at Sebastian, and he served with it in the campaign of the Pyrenees, and in the action of St. Juan de Luz. Then, exchanging into the 89th, which was in Canada, he became junior aide-de-camp to Sir Gordon Drummond, and was present at the siege of Fort Erie and the defence of Chippewa.<sup>2</sup> When the peace came he retired on half-pay, and exchanged the sword for the pencil.

The subjects of Nesfield's drawings give no indication of his having led a life of military campaigning; nor, with one exception, are they taken from the countries which he visited as a soldier. Five out of the eight which he exhibited in the year of his election are scenes in Piedmont and among the Swiss Alps. Two of the latter, from the Reichenbach and the Devil's Bridge, belong to a class of subject for which he came to be much esteemed, namely waterfalls. He won the spurs of his new calling by these his first achievements; for he was elected a Member on the 9th of June, 1823, but three months after he had been admitted as an Associate. Except one, his ten subjects the next season are all from Great Britain, and two again are waterfalls, one of them the 'High Force of the Tees,' the other (which is the exception above referred to) the 'Falls of Niagara, from a sketch taken on the spot in 1814.' This last drawing is the subject of specially warm commendation from our friend Pyne, who declares that the drawings of this 'new disciple' in the school of water-colours contributed much to the variety of the collection, and augured well for his future.<sup>3</sup> In his drawings of the succeeding years (which are not numerous, being but thirty-four from 1823 to 1831,

<sup>1</sup> A view of the castle, exhibited in 1824, is engraved in Surtees's *History of Durham*. An effective scene in the park, with antlered stags, by Nesfield, was lent by Mr. T. M. Shuttleworth to the Manchester Jubilee Show, 1887.

<sup>2</sup> *Men of the Reign* (1885).

<sup>3</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 128.

and sometimes only one in a season), he maintains his predilection for cascades, taking them now from Scotland, and adding some views of the Isle of Staffa, in which the wash of the waves is given with great spirit and truth. Ruskin, in praising Nesfield's representation of moving water, sums up a description of his art in the following passage, which seems to leave little or nothing unsaid as to its general characteristics. Nesfield, he writes, 'has shown extraordinary feeling, both for the colour and the spirituality of a great waterfall; exquisitely delicate in his management of the changeful veil of spray or mist, just in his curves and contours, and rich in colour, if he would remember that in all such scenes there is much gloom as well as much splendour, and relieve the lustre of his attractive passages of colour with more definite and prevalent greys, and give a little more substance to parts of his picture unaffected by spray, his work would be nearly perfect. His seas are also most instructive; a little confused in chiaroscuro, but refined in form and admirable in colour.'<sup>1</sup> Although Nesfield's composition lacks some of the repose of the earlier school, his works are marked by a fine play of line; and they were a distinct feature in the exhibitions of his day. Until 1833 his name is entered in the catalogues as 'W. Nesfield' only.

SAMUEL JACKSON, an able and sound if not a very prolific artist, was an Associate of the Society for twenty-six years from the date of his election, the 10th of February, 1823. He hailed from Bristol, where his father was a merchant, and he was born in 1796. Of his sixteen drawings in the gallery during Cristall's term of office, those in the first four or five years were views in or within easy reach of his native city, with a few 'compositions.' In 1828 and 1831 he exhibited subjects from the West Indies, whither he had gone in the year 1827 on a voyage for the benefit of his health. In 1829 he had views in North Wales, and in 1830 at Lynmouth, in Devon. Landscapes of this kind, chiefly from Wales, treated with an eye to pictorial breadth, and good judgment in arranging forms and masses, were to be the staple of his contributions.

Of Jackson's early life and education, it has only to be recorded that he was placed at first in his father's office; but fonder of stretching his legs in the country than bending them under a desk, he took holiday tours on foot in Scotland and Ireland, during which he made

<sup>1</sup> *Modern Painters*, i. 344-5



slight pencil sketches (some of which are in his son's possession), and so gained an acquaintance with and fostered a love of nature, which induced him to abandon commercial figures for picturesque landscape. He became a pupil of Francis Danby (afterwards A.R.A.), who resided at Bristol for many years during the earlier part of his career;<sup>1</sup> and he was, we have seen, about twenty-seven years of age when he joined our Society. He resided during this period at 'Cotham Vale, Bristol.'

Several of the artists above dealt with had, in their répertoire of subjects, a marine department, more or less distinct from those of another class. Of Prout and Cotman the practice therein was concurrent with architecture; of Cox and Fielding with general landscape. But there was for the time no exhibitor who could be called exclusively a 'marine painter.' This title, however, which was assumed conjointly with that of 'landscape painter' by JOHN WHICHELO, had a right in his case to priority over the latter. Elected on the same 10th of February, 1823, with Nesfield and Jackson, Whichelo, for forty years and more, sent drawings to the gallery as an Associate exhibitor. There was more admixture of inland views in his later years; but at present his subjects were mostly maritime, and they were nearly confined to the coasts of the British Channel, with a few in Holland and Belgium. Harbour scenes were frequent, many of his studies at this time being among the men-of-war at Portsmouth. He had thirty-three drawings in the gallery during Cristall's presidency.

The year of this artist's birth is not recorded in the dictionaries, nor his parentage, nor much of his antecedents beyond what the catalogues tell us. His education in art has been attributed to Varley, of whom he was believed to have been an early pupil,<sup>2</sup> and also to Cristall, to whose style his works bear more resemblance. He is said to have been employed at one time, like Prout, in making topographical drawings at five shillings apiece to illustrate copies of Pennant's *Tours*.<sup>3</sup> There are also three plates in the *Beauties of England and Wales* after drawings by 'Wichelo.'<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Danby was about three years older than Jackson. He came from Ireland in 1813 on an intended visit to London, but got no nearer than Bristol. (See Redgrave's *Dictionary*.)

<sup>2</sup> J. J. J. *ex relatione* S. Palmer.

<sup>3</sup> J. J. J. MSS.

<sup>4</sup> In vol. x. part iv. viz.: 'Westminster Abbey,' published in 1814; 'New Drury Lane Theatre,' 1813; 'The Surgeons' New Theatre, Linco'n's Inn Fields,' 1814.

The catalogues of the Society show some looseness in recording his name. It is variously entered : from 1823 to 1829 as '*J. Whichelo* ;' from 1830 to 1834 as '*J. M. Whichelo* ;' and from and after 1835 as '*John Whichelo*.' In the Academy catalogues there are further varieties, which appear to have even led to mistakes of identity.<sup>1</sup> Similarity of subject, and the address in common of 'Chalk Cottage, Brixton,' leave small room for doubt that the 'J. Whichelo' (or as afterwards written 'J. M. Whichelo') who brought four sea-pieces for exhibition to Pall Mall East in 1823 was no other than 'C. J. M. Whichelo' who had one at Somerset House in the same year.<sup>2</sup> According to Graves,<sup>3</sup> the name of C. J. M. Whichelo first appears in the Academy catalogues in 1810. It accompanies a 'View on Brighton Beach,' and the address is 33 Strand. After a year's absence it reappears with 'Portsmouth Beach,' and the addition and address, '*Marine and Landscape Painter to His R.H. the Prince Regent* ; 1 Albion Place Blackfriars.' And so, or nearly so, it is seen with intervals until, in 1818, there is added another artist's name, 'H. M. Whichelo,' probably a son,<sup>4</sup> both being at one place of residence, '29 Stamford Street, Blackfriars Road.' After 1818, nothing more is recorded of C. J. M. Whichelo's post at Court ; and indeed there are no exhibits with all these initials until 1823 aforesaid, when the name thus reappears with the address, 'Chalk Cottage, Brixton.' But our artist's proved trick of shedding prefixes leads one to suppose that a certain 'J. Whichelo,' of 'Chalk Farm, Brixton,' who had one exhibit at the Academy in 1819, is the same man ; notwithstanding the subject, which is in quite a different line from his other known works. It is 'A Scene from Roderick the Last of the Goths,' and illustrates five lines from Southey.

<sup>1</sup> Graves's list contains five Whichelos ; but they seem reducible to three.

<sup>2</sup> There was in the 'Exhibition of Water-Colours by artists born anterior to 1800,' held at the Burlington Fine Arts Club in 1871, a small 'View of Charing Cross with Men in the Pillory,' lent by Mr. John Heugh, which was signed at the back '*C. J. M. Whichelo, delt., 1812* ;' and the artist so named is described in the catalogue as 'Memb. O.W.C.S.' The view may have been one of the 'Pennant' drawings above referred to.

<sup>3</sup> *Dictionary of Artists*.

<sup>4</sup> This latter, it is probable, is not only the same artist who under these initials and surname exhibited landscapes and buildings (not 'sea-pieces' as Graves has it) at the Royal Academy until 1842, but the 'H. W. Whichelo Junr' who had a view of the 'House of John Knox' there in 1844, and the 'H. M. Whichelo Junr,' Drawing master at the Stepney and Stockwell Grammar Schools, who published in 1849 a small 12mo treatise called *Hints to Amateurs ; or, Rules for the Use of the Black Lead Pencil*, and who is shown by testimonials at the end of that book to have been employed in teaching in ladies' schools about Clapham, where he had for some years resided.

Another half-dozen of this younger generation of landscape painters were made Associates towards the close of this period, between 1827 and 1829. These will be dealt with before proceeding to the group of figure men.

Between 1827 and 1834 there are sixty-one drawings named in the catalogue as the work of *S. Austin*, a landscape and maritime painter from Liverpool, who died in the prime of life in the year last mentioned. SAMUEL AUSTIN was born in 1796,<sup>1</sup> probably of humble parentage, for he was educated at a charity school in his native town. Those who knew him describe him as of a peculiarly sensitive nature, with an earnest enthusiasm in the pursuit of art, which rendered him very interesting and attractive. These qualities were evinced from boyhood. He used in after years to recall the strong emotion with which, when engaged in making a study of his schoolroom, he overheard the simple criticism 'That's not bad,' from some one who chanced to cast an eye upon his drawing. When older, and employed as a clerk in a Liverpool bank, he still made time for practice with his pencil. He would keep late hours to indulge his propensity, until detected by the light that shone beneath his bedroom door. Then he rose betimes, and went out sketching in the fields until his office hours began. At length he gave up the attempt to serve two masters, and lost a good salary in order that he might become a professional artist. Some wisely charitable person gave him the means of receiving three precious lessons from the great De Wint. When the last came to an end, and the strain of his attention was relaxed, and he felt that he was to be told no more, the poor young man burst into tears. But he laid to heart the principles of his teacher, and so profited by the instruction received, that his drawings are apt to resemble De Wint's both in style and quality, and some of his work has been pronounced worthy of that great master's hand, even when at its best.

Austin's first exhibited drawing was at the Royal Academy in 1820; the subject, 'Spellow Mill, Walton, near Liverpool.' On the forming of the Society of British Artists in 1824, he was one of the foundation members; and he had altogether nine works in their Suffolk Street gallery<sup>2</sup> in the years 1824-26. On the 12th of February, 1827, he

<sup>1</sup> Catalogue of an Exhibition, at the Liverpool Art Club, of *Water-Colour Drawings by Artists born in the Eighteenth Century*. 1874.

<sup>2</sup> One of these, a 'Scene in Nant Frangcon, North Wales,' is believed to be a drawing, now in the writer's possession, which has been exposed to ordinary daylight for at least fifty years to his own knowledge, and probably ever since it was painted, with little apparent deterior-



was elected an Associate of our Society, and thenceforth exhibited at Pall Mall East only.

Austin's best works are generally coast, harbour, and river scenes, with boats ; facility in painting which class of subjects, in a broad way without much detail, he acquired by study on his busy native river, the Mersey. A considerable portion of his drawings are from Liverpool and the neighbourhood. But from and after 1829 he extends his scope, in the same class of subjects, to Holland, Belgium, and the Rhine ; and in 1830 includes Normandy. His inland drawings are mostly from North Wales. With these there are every year one or two rustic figures or groups. And in his first we find a more ambitious fancy of 'Æneas at the Court of Dido.'

As with most of his brethren, Austin employed a part of his time in giving lessons to lady amateurs.<sup>1</sup> Some pencil drawings made under his direction are smooth and highly finished, and in their way delicate and graceful, in a style now entirely obsolete. His wife, for he was now married, gave lessons in dancing, having, it is believed, been herself a dancer by profession.

When seized with the pulmonary attack which proved fatal, our artist was engaged in painting a composition of a shepherdess and her flock, wherein he had contrived to indicate the approach of a swain by a commotion among the sheep. The work was complete, except in the representation of the woman's shoe. Having become so weak that he was unable to finish this, he employed Hargreaves, a well-known miniature painter of Liverpool, to supply the defect. Hearing that this artist had taken upon himself to go further, and touch upon the face, Austin sent for the picture to his bedside, and, with many expressions of indignation on seeing that this was really the case, seized a sponge, and would have wiped out the offending part had not his weak arm dropped before he could accomplish his purpose.

From that bed he never rose. But it was among his last sources of gratification to feel that, had he done so, it would have been with the full honours upon him of Membership of the Water-Colour Society, a consummation which he had ardently desired. It was too

ration. Another drawing of Austin's, which was in the same collection, and is probably of about the same date, has within his remembrance lost its yellow, and therewith much of its effect of sunshine.

<sup>1</sup> His last pupil was Miss Anna Swanwick, the accomplished translator of Goethe, Schiller, and Æschylus.

well known that he was doomed never to exercise the privileges of that order; but it was generously determined that this should not be allowed to deprive his family of the benefit of his attaining the rank which he deserved. By that time Copley Fielding had become President. When relating the circumstances long after to Mr. Jenkins, he added that the act 'did honour to the Society.' Samuel Austin was made a Member on the 9th of June, 1834, and died at Liverpool in the following July. On the 1st of December in the same year a sum of 84*l.* was ordered to be paid to his widow, as his share of the Society's fund.

Austin left (at least) one daughter, who went to his old master De Wint for instruction. On her showing him a river sketch which he had directed her to make from a given point by way of experiment, De Wint expressed astonishment at her having treated the subject exactly with the feeling which he would have looked for in a work by her deceased father.

Austin exhibited sixty-one drawings in the gallery from 1827 to 1834. A dozen or more of his landscapes have been engraved and published in collections of the 'Annual' class. Five, dated 1831, 1832, drawn from the sketches of Captain Robert Elliot, R.N., are in his *Views in the East*, 2 vols. imp. 4to, 1833, some at least of which were republished in Emma Roberts's *Hindustan*, 2 vols. 4to, 1845, and at intermediate dates in Fisher's *Drawing-Room Scrap-Book*, wherein are also, in 1832-33, three of his Liverpool views. One, of 'Liverpool, 1664,' is in Tillotson's *New Waverley Album*. In the *Gallery of British Artists*, 2 vols. 4to, 1834, are 'View on the River Dort' engraved by J. C. Bentley, and 'Church of Notre Dame, Bruges.' Another small plate of Dort was engraved after him by William Miller.

GEORGE PYNE, another of the trio of Associates elected on the 12th of February, 1827, was one of two sons of William Henry Pyne who followed the arts.<sup>1</sup> He married John Varley's second daughter, Esther, and it is reasonable to infer that this double relationship to the old Society in the persons of two of its original Members had something to do with his election; for his works were scarcely of sufficient importance to found a claim upon, on their own account. They are pale drawings of the topographic kind, which might have

<sup>1</sup> *Century of Painters*, ii. 504.

been done with the *camera lucida*. He had exhibited two landscapes at Suffolk Street in 1826, and had fifteen drawings in our gallery between 1827 and 1831, mostly views in Kent.

JOHN BYRNE, elected Associate on the same 12th of February, 1827, with Austin and Pyne, was an older man than either. He was brother of Miss Byrne the flower painter (one of the original Associates of 1806, and now again a Member of the Society), and only son of William Byrne, the long-deceased landscape engraver; having been born in 1786, and being the youngest of the family. Like his other sisters, Letitia and Elizabeth, he had assisted the father by etching his plates, and, also like them, had engraved plates on his own account, for example some of Wild's *Cathedrals*. But he left off engraving to join his elder sister, as a limner in his own branch, that of landscape. After exhibiting two views near London in 1822-23, at Somerset House, and more of the same class at Suffolk Street in the three following seasons, he availed himself for twenty years of the privilege of sending drawings to Pall Mall East, without rising to the rank of a Member of our Society.

His subjects from 1827 to 1831<sup>1</sup> are views of well-known English and Welsh places, and often near London; but those in the last year are all from North Wales. In 'Twickenham on the Thames,' exhibited in 1830, and now at South Kensington, which is reckoned 'a good example of his art,'<sup>2</sup> the sober harmony of colour and classic grace of the composition, as well as the simple method of working in transparent pigment, evince an alliance with the earlier school of water-colour painting to which, from his descent, he might have been expected to belong.

WILLIAM EVANS, a highly respected and very energetic Member of our Society, with which he was connected for nearly half a century, was elected an Associate on the 11th of February, 1828. It is not only for the purpose of distinction from a younger and later namesake who came from Bristol, that this artist is generally known, by reference to his birthplace, as *Evans of Eton*. He had stronger claims to that title. Not only was he born there, on the 4th of December, 1797, and not only did he reside there all his life, but his father<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Except 'Tivoli, from a Sketch by Mr. G. Morant, jun.,' 1828. <sup>2</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary*.

<sup>3</sup> *Samuel Evans*. There was a water-colour study by him of 'Old Windsor Bridge' in the Royal Academy Winter Exhibition in 1878. Redgrave calls him 'William,' and says that his son succeeded him as drawing master at Eton in 1818.



before him, and his son after, held the office of drawing master to Eton College. There he himself received his education; and in later life he became the head of one of its houses, performing the duties of that position with high credit, and acknowledged permanent benefit to the standard of the school.

Evans was not merely a drawing master, but an accomplished artist, having (it may be presumed) been attracted by a real calling to the pursuit of art, when, after a short trial of the less congenial study of medicine, he became a pupil of De Wint's. From that painter he probably derived a vigour and a richness of tone in his landscapes, which are often of a class of subjects that De Wint might have selected. Though excellent in quality they do not, however, possess any marked original characteristics.

The name of Evans of Eton properly belongs to the presidency of Fielding; for he only exhibited as a Member during the last year of Cristall's, having sent twenty works to the gallery in the previous three years (1828-30) as an Associate. He was elected a Member on the 7th of June, 1830, and had twelve drawings in the following year. Most of the subjects are from Windsor and the neighbourhood, and some are from the Rhine. A few are rustic figures. Two, in 1829, are noted as 'the property of his Majesty.'

THALES FIELDING was one of the four youths who, very early in the century, had been sent out by the Ambleside portrait painter, their father, to run wild with their sister among the hills of Westmoreland, and inhale fresh air and artistic inspiration. Copley was the second of them, and he the third, born in 1793; there being thus an interval of about six years between their births. Thales like the rest had grown up to be an artist of ability. Copley and he had confined themselves to painting; whereas Theodore<sup>1</sup> the eldest and Nathan the youngest had combined the practice of engraving with water-colour art.

Thales Fielding had exhibited twenty-five works at Spring Gardens between 1816 and 1820, and from the time of his election as an Associate, 16 February, 1829, to 1837, in which year he died, still an Associate, on the 10th of December, he had fifty-three more, making seventy-eight in all, and an average of from three to eight a year. His

<sup>1</sup> Graves in his *Dictionary of Artists* seems to unite two of the family in 'Thrales (*sic*) Hy. Adol. Fielding.

most frequent subject is 'Landscape with Cattle,' in which the latter generally constitute the leading motive, but are sometimes backed up by a distant view of a well-known place or object. He also painted general landscapes, mostly from the south coast of Dorset, Sussex, and Kent; never out of England or Wales. But he was a figure man as well, making rustic studies of gipsies, fisher folk, and the like. More than that, he even ventured upon classic ground, illustrating Virgil and Ovid, and depicted alike the fate of Arethusa and the trials of Job, together with the witches in *Macbeth*, and a scene or two from the Waverley Novels.

His colour was pleasing, and he is commended for his figure-drawing and the grouping of his compositions. His works are seldom met with. He held the post of teacher of drawing in the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.

## CHAPTER VI

## FIGURES, ANIMALS, AND STILL LIFE

Biographies continued (to 1831)—*Stephanoff*—*Richter*—Biographies of new Associates (to 1831 or death)—*J. M. Wright*—*J. F. Lewis*—*P. Williams* (died 1885)—*A. Chisholm*—*Eliza Sharpe*—*Louisa Sharpe*—*J. W. Wright*—*F. Tayler*—*Miss Byrne* (died 1837)—*Mrs. Fielding* (resigned 1835)—*Miss Scott* (Mrs. Brookbank, retired 1838)—*Miss Barret*—(died 1836)—Various incidents—Plans for new Gallery—Sir Thomas Lawrence's funeral—Hostile criticism—New Water-Colour Society founded.

ALTHOUGH the painters of landscape continued throughout this period to provide the *pièces de résistance* in the annual bill of fare, there was also an ingredient of figure subjects which leavened the mass, and added some piquancy to the general flavour of the banquet. Not only did several artists among those already mentioned, William Hunt pre-eminently, vary their rural scenes by an admixture of rustic figures studied from the life, and not only did Cristall now and then take higher flights into the classic realm; but there was besides a little group of painters, more exclusively of the figure, whose function it was to supply the popular appetite with what is called 'historic *genre*.' They brought a contingent of pretty pieces with a story in each, either humorous or pathetic, or neither, generally of events of a past age, real or imaginary. Sometimes the artist was his own inventor; but far more often he turned over the pages of history or fiction, and culled the flowers thereof to form his gay bouquet. As, however, in landscape, a succession of painters were year after year selecting the same views from Wales and elsewhere, to dish up again and again at the annual feast; so in the figure school we find a set of stock subjects oft repeated from Shakspere and Cervantes, and other great authors, from the Waverley Novels, and the History of England.

Some old as well as new names are included in the list of this class of contributors. A supply of such illustrative drawings was furnished by JAMES STEPHANOFF, who remained a Member during the



whole of this period, and afterwards for thirty years more. In 1821 three out of his four exhibits are described as portraits, it having presumably been thought expedient to relax the rules respecting their admission on an occasion when the Society was reduced to considerable straits in getting up an exhibition. In the following year he showed the drawing of the King's coronation scene, executed as before mentioned in conjunction with Pugin and engraved in Sir George Nayler's book, for which he (as well as his brother) drew some of the full-length coloured costume portraits,<sup>1</sup> and in 1824 an 'Interior of the House of Lords during the important session of 1820.' He is also believed to have put in the figures in Nash's 'Brighton Pavilion.' Scenes of pageantry and the congregation of many figures were within his appropriate range, alike in the illustration of present and past times. Among the latter were (in 1823) the splendours of the Field of the 'Cloth of Gold,' 'Henry VIII. and suite' at the French Queen's masquerade, and (in 1825) the oft-painted incident of our own Queen Bess and Raleigh's cloak. Between 1827 and 1830 he depicts various events in the career of Mary Stuart, referring mostly for facts to Miss Benger's *Life* of that ill-fated sovereign. These works led the way to the painter's appointment, when King William came to the throne, as 'Historical Painter in Water-Colours in ordinary to his Majesty,' this addition being appended to his name for the first time in the catalogue of 1831.

Scenes from the *Arabian Nights*, Moore's *Lalla Rookh*, the *Merchant of Venice*, &c.; with stories of Rubens and Rembrandt in their studios; the deeds of knights in the Middle Ages; and fancy groups with lovers and the like, make up the rest of the forty-three drawings exhibited by Stephanoff during Cristall's presidency. Pyne the gazetteer goes into an ecstasy over Stephanoff's first 'Arabian Nights' subject (in 1824), the 'Porter and the three Sisters of Bagdad,' its delicate execution and varied harmonies of colour; and observes that for compositions of this class in the cabinet size 'nothing can exceed the capacity of water-colours.'<sup>2</sup>

The following are prints after James Stephanoff's designs, in the *Annals* of this period (those by his brother F. P. Stephanoff are more numerous): In the *Forget-me-not* for 1828, 'The Bridal Morning;' for 1829, 'The Proposal.' (Drawings of such subjects were at

<sup>1</sup> These drawings are now at the South Kensington Museum.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, ii. 83.

the Water-Colour Society in 1828.)—In the *Literary Souvenir* for 1829, 'Feramorz relating the Story of the Peri to Lalla Rookh,' engraved by F. Bacon. (A drawing of this subject was at the Water-Colour Society in 1826).—In the *Keepsake* for 1831, 'Chacun à son Goût' (a gouty lover), engraved by F. Bacon. In the *Waverley Novels*, the author's favourite edition, there is a vignette by James Stephanoff of Madge and Jeanie Deans, in 'The Heart of Midlothian.' The *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, 1833, contains an engraving of 'Rembrandt in his Study' ( $6\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$  in.) by C. G. Lewis after James Stephanoff, dated 1831.

Of HENRY RICHTER'S drawings, which numbered only sixteen in the same period, about one half were scenes from Shakspeare of a humorous kind, such as the 'Taming of the Shrew' (1827), 'Touchstone and Audrey,' 'The Adventure at Gad's Hill,' and others (1828), and 'Falstaff and Bardolph' (1829). A more popular subject was that by which he was first represented at Pall Mall East (in 1823), entitled 'A Picture of Youth; or, the School in an Uproar.' This was a water-colour repetition, made for the purpose of engraving, of a picture in the possession of Mr. W. Chamberlayne, M.P. The subject was highly successful with the multitude, and was reproduced in prints, very familiar to the public half a century ago. There are a bench upset and a boy sprawling on the floor in the vain endeavour to capture an apple which rolls towards a cavity therein; a youthful caricaturist chalks up the master's likeness behind the door; while the village pedagogue, with the features of Dr. Syntax, is seen by one frightened lad alone, entering rod in hand to administer coercion to the unruly realm. We read in the 'Repository of Arts' for 1822 (vol. xiv. p. 123) that 'Mr. Henry Richter has commenced the publication of Illustrations of his works,' and that 'the first series consists of a small vignette frontispiece of the original' of this picture 'and four prints of its separate groups on an enlarged scale.' This drawing was followed by a companion subject in 1825, called 'The School in Repose,' representing a girls' school, with the mistress asleep, which was sold for two hundred and fifty guineas; and in 1826 a companion to the 'Brute of a Husband' (exhibited, as aforesaid, in 1811 at the Associated Artists') was painted by him for his chief patron Mr. Chamberlayne, with the name 'Annette and Lubin.' Among his engraved works of this time are 'The Logicians,' in the *Forget-me-not* for 1828, and

‘Anne Page and Slender,’ in the *Keepsake* for 1829, both engraved by C. Rolls.

Richter’s membership had not been continuous. It has been already related how he failed to exhibit in 1822, and then dropped to the rank of Associate. His name so appears in the catalogues for 1823, 1824, and 1825 (but without effects in 1824). On the 1st of July, 1825, he was re-elected a Member; and he so remained for the next two years. On the 4th of June, 1827, however, he again, for some unknown reason or other, tendered his resignation. Then, changing his mind once more, he allowed himself to be re-elected an Associate on the 11th of February, 1828, and sent six drawings to the gallery that year, more than twice the number he had ever before exhibited at one time. On the 2nd of June he was again raised to the rank of Member, which he retained thenceforth to the time of his death, nearly thirty years after.

In 1824 another illustrator came into the field in the person of JOHN MASEY WRIGHT. He was made Associate on the 29th of February, and Member on the 24th of June, both in that year; exhibiting one drawing in the former capacity during the season which intervened. The subject was of his favourite class, being the scene in *King Henry IV.* where Falstaff drives his vapouring follower, Pistol, out of the parlour at the Boar’s Head. Scenes from Shakspeare, moderate in size, and generally involving the grouping of three or four figures, were Wright’s staple productions, varied by illustrations of Boccaccio, and a few from other authors.

He did not achieve the same depth of colour as Richter or Stephanoff; but his drawings are tender and harmonious. Their attraction would be greater were it easier to regard them apart from the obvious model upon which they were constructed, namely the works of Stothard, R.A. In the case of the drawing, indeed, which he exhibited in 1828, these relations were in a manner reversed. For the subject was the same as that of the older artist’s better known composition, representing the ‘Procession of the Flitch of Bacon’ (engraved by J. H. Watt as a companion to the well-known ‘Canterbury Pilgrims’). Stothard’s picture was painted in 1824–25; but Wright had forestalled it by about eight years; for he had exhibited a treatment of the subject in oils at the Royal Academy in 1817, of which his drawing at the Water-Colour Society was



doubtless a repetition. The connexion between the two artists had been closer than what might have arisen from Wright's high admiration for the works of his distinguished exemplar. He was Stothard's disciple in a stricter sense ; for when a youth of sixteen he had had the privilege of being introduced to that painter by a lady who lived next door to the latter in Newman Street, and he thus obtained the entrée of Stothard's studio, where that accomplished artist kindly allowed him to watch his work. Moreover, to use Mr. Jenkins's words, 'there was so much akin in the minds and gentle natures of both, that Wright may have followed in the track of the great illustrator rather from natural impulse and similarity of taste than from any want of original powers of his own. Like Stothard, he was a great reader, and an ardent lover of our imaginative literature, and hence for his subjects drew largely from the poets. His earliest and latest designs were alike derived from his favourite authors. Of compositions from Shakspeare he never wearied ; so constantly did his thoughts dwell on the beauties of the great dramatist, that it is related by his son, who watched him through a severe illness, that he was repeatedly startled by his father reciting in a loud voice in his sleep long passages from Shakspeare's plays.'<sup>1</sup>

Wright was in his forty-seventh year when he joined the Society. He was born on the 14th of October, 1777,<sup>2</sup> in one of two cottages in Pleasant Row, Penton Place, Pentonville, owned by his father, who was an organ builder. When a boy he showed a remarkable ear for music ; and it is related that when very young, being set down before an organ at the Bagnigge Wells Tea Gardens, he astonished a crowd of listeners by performing extempore upon it. A correct ear was so far a qualification for his father's business ; but when he was articled to a brother builder of organs, he showed that he had a stronger love for graphic than for musical art. He proved but a profitless apprentice, and got into disgrace through a habit of making sketches on the organ pipes, and using the plane to efface them, until the wood became too thin to serve its purpose. So his master gave him up as worse than useless. He then got employment for a time from Broadwood the pianoforte maker, as a tuner ; but was eventually permitted to follow

<sup>1</sup> *Art Journal*, Feb. 1867 (obituary notice of Wright, by J. J. J.).

<sup>2</sup> The year 1773 is given as the date of his birth in several published biographies, including one by Mr. Jenkins himself ; but the above date appears by a memorandum (dated 14 Dec. 1866) to have been furnished by Wright's daughter, Mrs. Bracebridge ; and in another Wright himself is reported to have said on the 25th of July, 1861, 'I am now eighty-three.'

his natural bent as a draftsman. Except as to his sitting at the feet (or standing at the easel) of Stothard as above mentioned, he was, it is most likely, self-taught. Certainly his figures do not bear the stamp of severe anatomical study; and, as his daughter told Mr. Jenkins, he never painted from the living model.

Nothing further has transpired as to his career until, at the age of thirty-three, he married a Miss Meadows, and went to live in the Bishop's Walk, Lambeth. The place formerly so named lay between the Archbishop's garden and the river, and now forms part of Lambeth Palace Road, the Medical Schools of St. Thomas's Hospital occupying the site of the old houses of that day. It was at that time a theatrical quarter. In the same house with the Wrights resided John H. Wilson, Scotch landscape and marine painter, afterwards R.S.A., but better known then as 'Jock Wilson,' scene-painter at Astley's, who had been in London for about eight years. The two brothers of the brush naturally became intimate, and the scenic artist induced his acquaintance to try his hand at the same branch of art; wherein, as we have seen in the case of David Cox at Birmingham, a figure man may on occasions make himself specially useful. It was not exactly on stage scenery that Wright's talent was so employed at first, but in the painting of panoramas. There was, in Bishop's Walk aforesaid, an old wooden public-house, kept by a man of the name of Bent, where actors and scene painters were wont to congregate, and 'Jock Wilson' was one of the regular *habitués*. At a later time it was the resort of Stanfield and Roberts, and our sometime Member, George Chambers. Here his friend introduced Wright to Thomas Edward Barker, eldest son of Robert Barker, the founder of panoramic exhibitions.

Some account of the Barker family, the opening of the building in Leicester Square by the father in 1793, and the continuance of the exhibition after his death in 1806 by his younger son Henry Aston Barker, Girtin's friend and companion, has been given in an early part of this history. Thomas Barker had also worked for his father, and had (as it may be recollected) joined in partnership with our old Member R. R. Reinagle in 1802, and set up a rival establishment in a building afterwards converted into the Strand Theatre. Here it was that Wright began his work of this kind, by putting in some figures in a panorama then preparing for exhibition. He painted for Thomas Barker for some time, and afterwards entered into an engagement for seven years with his brother Henry to assist in a series

of representations of the battles of the Peninsula, which were exhibited in Leicester Square with great success.<sup>1</sup> In subjects such as these, the figures were obviously of the first importance, and much of the success was owing to their execution, which was in life size, and to the skill with which they were put together in groups by Masey Wright. He gave life (and death too) to those in the battles of Vittoria, Corunna, and finally Waterloo, and also assisted in a view of Corfu. The panorama of Waterloo made Barker's fortune, and when it had served its ends here, was taken to India by Wright's brother-in-law, James Meadows, who was also engaged in this kind of painting.

He also at one time was employed on scenery for the stage; for he used, when a very old man, to recount, 'with a playful smile of satisfaction,' an interview with Zara, principal scene painter at the Opera House, to whom he applied for work. 'What can you do?' asked Zara. 'Figures,' answered Wright. 'How much do you require?' 'Five guineas a week.' 'It is too much. I will give you three,' was the reply. Wright was engaged on these terms, and set to paint some Cupids. He acquitted himself so well in the trial, that when Zara came and looked at his work, he exclaimed in the same laconic style, 'They are good; you are clever. I shall give you the five guineas.' This was about the year 1820. At one time he was simultaneously engaged by the Barkers at eight pounds, and at His Majesty's Theatre at six pounds a week.

It is, however, on a small scale by his illustrative compositions in book and in pictures, that the merits of this artist can alone be known to posterity. His name first appears in the catalogues of the Royal Academy in 1812<sup>2</sup> as 'J. Wright,' with the address '24 Great Pulteney Street, Golden Square,' and a picture on a curious subject. It was called 'The Burning Shame: a punishment for a bad lawyer.' It purports to illustrate an old custom of the time of Elizabeth, said to

<sup>1</sup> Henry Barker and his assistant John Burford bought the Strand Panorama from Reinagle and T. E. Barker in 1816 (see *supra*, p. 213, n. 2), and kept it open for some years in partnership with him, retaining at the same time the sole proprietorship of that in Leicester Square, where he was eventually succeeded by his assistant Robert Burford, who had the sole management from 1827 till his death in 1861. Henry A. Barker died in 1856, aged eighty-two.

<sup>2</sup> Both Redgrave and Graves assert that he began to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1808; but this appears to be a mistake. There is a 'J. Wright,' of 'Burlington Gardens,' who exhibits portraits in 1808-11, and afterwards. But in 1813 this name and address appear together with and distinct from 'J. M. Wright, 24 Great Pulteney Street.' It happens that a son of the 'J. Wright of Burlington Gardens' also became a 'Member of the Water-Colour Society.'



be peculiar to the Isle of Wight, whereunder the erring professional, placed in a barrel, and surrounded by a hoop of lighted candles, is driven out of Newport by a jeering crowd, to an accompaniment of rough music. It was painted for Mr. Vine, the liberal resident in the island, above mentioned as the friend and patron of Cristall. In 1813 he has 'The Ghost,' and a military subject, bred, no doubt, of his panorama painting, of 'Bonaparte burning the bridge over the Beresina, and sacrificing his rear guard.' In 1815 and 1816 he has a scene each from Don Quixote. In 1817 his address changes to 'Rodney Street, Pentonville,' and he exhibits the aforesaid 'Flitch of Bacon,' not, by the way, laying the scene at Dunmow in Essex, but in the Manor of Whichnoure, in Stafford, where, according to Blount's 'Jocular Tenures,' a similar custom was observed. Except with a portrait in the following year, his name is not found again at Somerset House. It was reserved for visitors to the gallery in Pall Mall East to see the display of his fertile invention or aptness of interpretation as an illustrative artist. He exhibited thirty-one drawings between 1824 and 1831, of which nearly half are of scenes from Shakspeare.

He also worked for the Annuals. In the *Literary Souvenir*, 1825, are 'The Decision of the Flower' (from *Faust*), and 'Ishmael and Miriam' (both engraved by C. Heath); 1826, 'The Troubadour Blondel and Richard Cœur de Lion,' and 'The Kiss,' after Retsch (both engraved by W. Humphrys). In the *Amulet*, 1826, 'The Dying Babe' (J. Mitchell); 1827, 'The Pastor of the Lac de Joue' (F. Engleheart).

Like most of his contemporaries, Wright was also employed in teaching amateurs. Among those to whom he gave lessons were Lady Craven and the daughters of Earl de Grey, and the Marquis of Lansdowne, at whose country houses he used to stay by invitation.

The year 1827 is noteworthy as that of the advent of JOHN FREDERICK LEWIS, then a young man in the first stage of a career which became one of the first distinction. He was destined to adorn the Society's gallery with some of the greatest achievements of modern art, and to fill for a few years its presidential chair. The Eastern subjects with which his name is chiefly associated were the work of his middle and later life. Those of Spain and Spanish

character which preceded them, though for the most part painted before the artist was thirty, also belong to a later period than that which we are now considering. He had not yet appeared before the world as a figure painter; and it is only in virtue of his triumphs then to come that he can properly be included in the main category to which this chapter is assigned. He was still what he began his artist life by being, a painter of animals. Mr. Ruskin has indeed argued, by a quaint conceit, that this earlier was but the introductory stage of, and essentially connected with his later pursuit, it being only the animal side of humanity and of human character that he afterwards undertook to paint.<sup>1</sup>

Lewis had attained his majority but eight months before his election as an Associate on the 30th of March, 1827. More than one point of connexion may be found in the early life of John Lewis with that of his great contemporary in the same branch of art, Sir Edwin Landseer. They are said to have been born in the same house in Queen Anne Street, Landseer being two or three years the senior. However that may be, an intimacy existed between the families of the engravers John Landseer and Frederick Christian Lewis, the respective fathers of the two young men, who could not fail to find a bond of sympathy in their common taste for drawing animals. Whether original or imparted in Lewis's case, it was strong enough to overcome his father's intention to bring him up to his own branch of art, that of engraving, for which he had already put him into training. The print-room at the British Museum has impressions of a few of his youthful attempts with the etching point. Some are copies from Dutch masters, and one from his father's etching of Okehampton Castle. A dance of peasants, after Ostade, is inscribed 'Copy by J. Lewis, aged 13;' and to a group of trees in front of some rough building, with a horse and two figures, probably original, the same date is assigned. There is also a kicking horse 'Etched by J. Lewis from an original drawing by Wyke.' But the boy preferred sketching from nature to copying the works of others; and eventually the father so far yielded to his wish as to consent to put his perseverance and ability to the test by means of a compact. He was to be allowed to follow his bent and be a painter if he should succeed in selling a picture in a London exhibition. It was rather like refusing one permission to go into the water until he could swim.

<sup>1</sup> See pamphlet on *Pre-Raphaelitism*.

But the first experiment was conclusive. In 1820, when not quite fifteen, he exhibited (at least) two pictures, one at the British Institution, the other at the Oil and Water Colour Society's Gallery in Spring Gardens;<sup>1</sup> and the former was bought by George Garrard, A.R.A., himself an animal painter and modeller of considerable repute. So the aspirant became free to do as he liked, and he devoted himself to the delineation of animals. For his studies of the animal kingdom young Lewis made great use of the menagerie which then existed at Exeter Change, in the Strand. There he was wont to draw assiduously from models after his own heart, and there he acquired the wonderful perception of the forms and character of the great carnivora which he soon after displayed. But his *début* in the gallery at Somerset House in 1821 was with a study of 'Puppies' from nature, and 'The intruding Cur.'

Several of the sketches which John Lewis had made at Exeter Change were bought from him by Northcote, R.A., who was fond of animals and successful in painting them, and may already have had in contemplation his illustrations to the 'One Hundred Fables,' first published in 1828. Northcote showed these sketches to President Lawrence, and Sir Thomas, who was a friend of the elder Lewis's, acted in a very practical way for the son's benefit, upon the opinion which he formed from them of his talent and skill. He engaged him for a year as an assistant draftsman, although at that time but fifteen years of age.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jenkins made the following memorandum, dated 16 November, 1857, of Lewis's own account of this period of his life: 'Lewis when a youth was much noticed by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and used to draw a great deal for him; sketching in animals and backgrounds to Sir Thomas's portrait pictures. Lewis then lived at St. John's Wood, and had to rise very early and walk to Sir Thomas's House in Russell Square, where he was expected to be at half-past seven o'clock to breakfast. Often when he returned home in the day he was so weary and sleepy that he went to bed again.'<sup>3</sup>

As the figure artist usually finds his first profit in human portraiture, so the earliest commissions received by our young painter of

<sup>1</sup> No. 73. Morning—Ploughing.

<sup>2</sup> *Art Journal*, 1858, p. 41.

<sup>3</sup> The quotation is given in full, because there is a difficulty in reconciling dates. According to the exhibition catalogues, Lewis began to reside at '21 St. John's Wood Road' in 1827, when he was twenty-two. In 1820, when he was fifteen, he gives his father's then address '9 Southampton Row, Paddington,' which would, however, suit the story equally well.



animals seem to have been to take the likenesses of favourite dogs and horses. These, with one exception, were the subjects of his six exhibits at Somerset House in 1822 and 1823. The exception was a picture in the latter year of a monkey (as described by Fielding) breaking a mirror to find his supposed companion within it. 'Fatal Curiosity,' as he called it, was well hung, and caught the eye of Stothard, R.A., who took it at first for a Landseer, and afterwards congratulated Lewis's father, saying that it was 'beautifully and delicately painted' and worthy of its good situation.<sup>1</sup> In 1822 Messrs. Hurst and Robinson, the enterprising firm of print publishers who succeeded the Boydells, bought his first large picture of 'Deer-shooting at Belhus, Essex,'<sup>2</sup> presumably for engraving.

Lewis now turned to further account the studies of wild beasts which he had made at Exeter Change, making most excellent use at the same time of the chalcographic skill which he had acquired under his father's guidance. He brought out a set of six quarto plates of *Studies of Wild Animals*. They are etched and mezzotinted with a masterful power scarcely to be surpassed, the more extraordinary when the artist's age, only nineteen, is taken into account. Ruskin, comparing Lewis's studies with those of the greatest animal painters who preceded him, writes thus in 1851: 'The sullen isolation of the brutal nature; the dignity and quietness of the mighty limbs; the shaggy mountainous power, mingled with grace as of a flowing stream; the stealthy restraint of strength and wrath in every soundless motion of the gigantic frame—all this seems never to have been seen, much less drawn, until Lewis drew, and himself conceived, a series of animals, now many years ago.'<sup>3</sup> The plates in question were published by W. B. Cooke of Soho Square. The imprints of the copies at the British Museum have dates from 1 May, 1824, to 10 September, 1825. Of the drawings for them four are stated on the prints to be in the possession of Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., and one each in that of Sir J. E. Swinburne, Bart. and James Vine, Esq., before mentioned. Two represent groups of a lion and lioness together, 'sleeping' in one case, 'prowling' in the other. The rest are heads, three of the lion, one of a tigress. In 1824-25 Lewis had also at the Academy two pictures of a 'Lion and Lioness,' and

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Bray's *Life of Stothard*, p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Art Journal*, 1858, p. 42.

<sup>3</sup> Pamphlet on *Pre-Raphaelitism*.

among his first four drawings in Pall Mall East in 1827 were 'The Vanquished Lion' and 'Dying Lioness.'

In the year 1824 higher patronage was conferred on the rising artist. He attracted the attention of King George the Fourth, and was employed for some years by his Majesty to paint deer and sporting subjects at Windsor. Pictures, or drawings,<sup>1</sup> of this class form a chief part of his contributions, both to the Royal Academy until 1827, and to the Water-Colour Society during his Associateship. Similar motives furnished work for the point as well as the pencil in a set of twelve *Etchings of Domestic Subjects*, &c., on a smaller scale (about 6 × 5 in.), published by his father in quarto in 1826,<sup>2</sup> with a dedication to 'the R<sup>t</sup> Hon. Mary Countess Harcourt.' These are in aquafortis, without the aid of mezzotint.

At the time of his election as an Associate, John Lewis was getting weary of this kind of art, as well as of the restraints of Court patronage. In his second year, 1828, he showed, by two drawings, 'Tyrolese Hunters,' and 'Scene near the Bridge of Sighs, Venice,' in our gallery, as well as by a sketch of 'A Chamois' which attracted much notice at the Academy, that he had ventured into a new field. He had been for a tour through the Tyrol to Venice and North Italy, and had there collected material of which he made use for several years.

On the 1st of June, 1829, he was elected a full Member; and he thenceforth for a long time devoted himself exclusively to painting in water-colours. In determining to confine himself to this medium, he is said to have listened to the persuasive voice of Robson, ever zealous and active in the cause, not only of the Society, but of the branch of art which it was formed to promote. In 1830 Lewis had one drawing in the Academy and thirteen at our gallery, whither he sent all his fifteen exhibits in 1831. Among the latter were a number of peasant studies in the Scotch Highlands, which were continued in 1832. 'Highland Hospitality,' considered his most important work at this time, was exhibited in the latter year. These Italian and

<sup>1</sup> 'An accident turned Lewis from working in oil to the practice of water-colour painting. Being asked to do some illustrations to Shakespeare, he became fascinated with the ease and with the simplicity of the tools required for working in water-colours.' (*Century of Painters*, new edition, 1890, p. 379.)

<sup>2</sup> The plates in nearly all cases have upon them the name J. F. Lewis as etcher in 1825, and F. C. Lewis as publisher in 1826. A later issue is dated 1836, with F. C. Lewis's then address '53 Charlotte Street, Portland Place,' added.

Scotch subjects constitute a transitional portion of his art work, intermediate between the animal period and the Spanish, which was now to succeed it. In the summer of 1832 he went to Spain; and from that event a new stage in his career must be dated, which does not belong to this chapter of our history.

From 1828 to 1833 there were yearly from one to three drawings of Italian peasants, eleven in all, by PENRY WILLIAMS, an Associate elected on the 8th of April in the first-named year, whose brief connexion with the Society entitles him to a short biographical notice here.

His name was familiar for many years to sojourners in Rome, where one of the first on the list of artists' studios which the sight-seer was expected to visit was his, at No. 12 Piazza Mignanelli. Murray's *Handbook* declares that the 'views of scenery about Rome, combined with the lovely groups of peasantry' here to be seen, 'are unrivalled. No painter,' it adds, 'has better succeeded in representing with accuracy the magnificent outline of the distant mountains, the details of the ancient edifices, and the splendid colouring cast by an Italian sun over the Campagna and the ruins scattered over it.' Williams's paintings were certainly very pretty and attractive, being not only thorough in workmanship, but skilfully composed, and agreeably dressed in gay colour. But they were somewhat conventional in character. The position in art to which they entitle him has been aptly described as somewhere between Uwins and Sir Charles Eastlake.<sup>1</sup> Of his work in oils the quality may be fairly estimated by three pictures in the National Gallery. His water-colour drawings are remarkable for great purity of colour and delicacy of detail. Some excellent sketches from Naples, in pencil and water-colours, by this artist, were shown at the Bethnal Green Museum in 1883, from the collection of Miss Adelaide Yates.

Penry Williams was a Welshman; born in 1798 at Merthyr Tydvil, where his father was a house-painter. Showing talent for design, he obtained an introduction to Lawrence, and coming to London was received as a student under Fuseli at the Royal Academy. On the 21st of July, 1821, the Society of Arts awarded him a large silver medal for a chalk drawing of the Ilyssus.<sup>2</sup> In 1822 he began to exhibit at Somerset House with a 'Portrait of a

<sup>1</sup> *Athenæum*, 8 Aug. 1885, p. 186.

<sup>2</sup> *Repository of Arts*, xii. 54.



Lady.' In 1823, 1824, and 1826 he had three English views there, and a 'Portrait of a Gentleman' (1824). In 1827 his name is absent. He had then gone to Italy; for he dates his next year's work from Rome, where he settled and remained domiciled for the rest of a long life.

Uwins writes from Naples in February 1829, to Severn in Rome, of his pleasure at Williams's success. 'If,' says his friend and brother artist, 'distinguished talent, liberality, good taste, with gentle, amiable manners, are likely to insure success, his course will be always prosperous, for he possesses all these qualities in a very high degree.'<sup>1</sup> This, leavened it may be by a touch of the fire inherent in his Welsh blood,<sup>2</sup> was the character he sustained during nearly sixty years' residence in the Eternal City, where he was warmly esteemed by a large acquaintance. The jubilee anniversary of his coming to Rome was there 'festively celebrated, much to the hero's surprise, by some appreciative friends in December 1876.' The late Mary Howitt, to whose autobiography this notification is due, describes him ten years before on a visit to Mr. and Mrs. Sandbach at Hafodunos, in Denbighshire, where 'agreeable country neighbours drive over for afternoon tea, and in the drawing room opening on the terrace, gay with masses of sweet-scented flowers, a noted Welsh painter, quiet elderly Penry Williams, very modestly exhibits his portfolio of charming Italian landscapes and figures. He speaks of getting back to Rome before the winter comes on, for he expects the Italians will soon be down on the Eternal City, and destroy the antique and picturesque to make way for modern railway stations and Government building.'<sup>3</sup> What Williams then anticipated came in some measure to pass before he died, in 1885, when about eighty-seven years of age.

Graves finds thirty-four works of his at the Royal Academy, nine at the British Institution, and two at Suffolk Street, between 1822 and 1869. There is one plate after P. Williams in Britton's *Cathedral Antiquities* (Peterborough, 1828); and the following contributions were made by him to the *Annals*: In the *Amulet* for 1827, 'Irish Holy Well,' engraved by H. Wallis (from a sketch by T. Crofton

<sup>1</sup> *Memoir of Uwins*, ii. 239.

<sup>2</sup> H. P. Riviere writes to Jenkins in March 1879, apparently in answer to inquiries made under the impression that Williams was dead: 'I could not press him about his age, &c., as that with him is a very ticklish subject, and . . . he inherits some of the passions of his mountainous country.'

<sup>3</sup> *Mary Howitt: an Autobiography*, ii. 179, 180, 285.

Croker); 1829, 'Wandering Minstrels of Italy,' engraved by W. Humphreys; 1830, 'Preparing for the Festa,' engraved by H. Rolls. In the *Literary Souvenir* for 1836, 'Italian Peasants before a Shrine,' engraved by C. Rolls; 'Italian Peasant Girls,' engraved by T. S. Engleheart.

ALEXANDER CHISHOLM, who became an Associate on the 9th of February, 1829, and so remained at his death nearly twenty years after, was a painter of 'subjects,' mostly of the illustrative sort, and of portraits, both in oil and water colour. As his name implies, he was a native of North Britain. Elgin was the place, and 1792 or 1793 the year, of his birth. As with many other of the artists whose careers have herein been traced, his early love of art had to contend against, and eventually overcame, a parent's intention as to his walk in life. His father apprenticed him to a weaver at Peterhead; but, as Masey Wright would draw cartoons upon his master's organ-pipes, so Sandie Chisholm would make designs upon the cloth entrusted to him, of quite a different character from what he had to follow with the shuttle. There he depicted 'all the eccentric figures he saw, and reminiscences which struck him;' and, when free, he used to repair to the seashore and make transient engravings on the sand. Then some pencils, the first he possessed, were given him by a friendly architect of the name of Mitchell.<sup>1</sup> And one day he walked off from Peterhead to Aberdeen, and coming upon a colour shop there, ingratiated himself with the artistic proprietor, and got from him some hints on light and shade. He was then but thirteen or fourteen years of age.

Nothing more is recorded of his education in art; but his practice seems to have begun with portraiture. He is said to have made so well a set of likenesses in black and white of the members of a church synod at Aberdeen, that he might have had a commission to paint them in colours had he then known how. About the year 1812 he went to Edinburgh, where he found patrons in the Earls of Elgin and Buchan, and was appointed a teacher of drawing in the schools of the Royal Scottish Academy. He also took at least one private pupil, namely Miss Susanna Stewart Fraser, described as 'an ex-

<sup>1</sup> Probably Robert Mitchell, who exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1782, and published in 1801 a folio entitled 'Plans &c. of buildings erected in England and Scotland,' with an essay on architecture, and coloured plates.

cellent and accomplished young lady,' who became his wife. In 1818 he, being then twenty-five or twenty-six years of age, came to London and obtained good employment in painting portraits. In 1820 he made his first appearance with 'Portrait of a Lady' at the Royal Academy. Thither he sent one or two portraits nearly every year until he joined our Society in 1829; one, in 1822, being of his patron, Lord Buchan. With these were two pictures more or less of the 'subject' class, namely: 'Boys with a Burning-glass' (in 1822), and 'The cut Foot' (in 1823), one of his principal works. On taking to water-colours he continued for a few years to paint scenes in modern life; and it was not until the succeeding presidency that he turned over the pages of history for subjects of illustration. Thus, of his nine drawings from 1829 to 1831, the chief titles are 'An Illicit Still' and 'Dragging for Sand Eels,' with such domestic themes as 'Maternal Affection' and 'Morning Ablution.'

Chisholm was also employed in designing for the Annuals. The *Forget-me-not* for 1830 contains 'The Orphan Family,' and that for 1831 'The Political Cobbler' by 'A. Chisholme.' (His name is sometimes erroneously spelt with a final *e*.)

On the day of Chisholm's election, there were also added to the Society's roll two sisters as lady Members, who belonged to the same class of illustrative artists. With him and Masey Wright, and the older Members Stephanoff and Richter, the *Misses Sharpe* made up a little group within the Society which represented the kind of popular art so conspicuously in vogue in the ornate Annuals and gift-book publications of that day.

During the first twenty years or so of their artist career the lives of *Eliza Sharpe* and *Louisa Sharpe* ran parallel. Both began as miniature painters, and both relinquished that laborious branch of art for a freer and bolder style of water-colour drawing. Both began to exhibit portraits at the Royal Academy in 1817.<sup>1</sup> They entered our

<sup>1</sup> The names of four Misses Sharpe, apparently sisters, occur in the Academy catalogues about this date. All were exhibiting portraits together in 1819 and for some years after, giving the same address, '13 King Street, Covent Garden.' Besides Eliza and Louisa, there were 'Miss Sharpe,' who according to Graves had twenty-two works at the Royal Academy between 1817 and 1828, and 'Miss M(ary) A(nne) Sharpe,' who on the same authority had twenty-three there and twenty-seven at Suffolk Street between 1819 and 1879 (*sic*). The sister last named, who also painted 'domestic' subjects, is credited with resemblance to Eliza and Louisa in talent and industry, but erroneously stated to have been also a Member of the Water-Colour Society, in Miss Clayton's *English Female Artists*, i. 378, 382. As that work was published in 1876, and mentions Mary Anne's death, it is also at variance with Graves's *Dictionary*.



Society together in 1829; and shared the same residences till 1834, when Louisa, the younger, married, and went to live in Germany.

ELIZA SHARPE, born in 1795 or 1796, was not only the elder of these two sisters, but outlived Louisa by more than thirty years. Miss Clayton (Mrs. Needham) describes Miss Eliza Sharpe as 'a woman of unusually original and marked character—tender-hearted and pitiful, though plain-spoken, and full of stern contempt for meanness, of generous anger against evil-doers;' and relates some instances, out of many, of her 'enthusiastic benevolence;' how, for example, she on one occasion astonished a coercive donkey-driver by clapping her own shoulder to his cart-wheel; how on another she had to bear a load of motherly abuse for venturing to clothe and feed, and even to wash, a naked starveling without its parent's leave; and how she saved a sick lady's life by bravery in a burning house.<sup>1</sup>

For a period of forty years she exhibited, though sparingly, in the gallery in Pall Mall East. Among her four drawings there between 1829 and 1831 were (in 1830), the 'Child on the Cliff' alarming its mother by playing near a precipice, as described in some verses by Rogers; and (in 1831) 'Belinda,' from the *Rape of the Lock*.

LOUISA SHARPE was in her time the more prolific as well as the better painter. Her drawing is firmer, her composition more compact; and she exhibits some sense of humour, while her sister deals more largely in sentiment. She had nine drawings in 1829 31, among them (in 1830), the 'Scene in the *Vicar of Wakefield*' where Mr. Burchell says 'Fudge' to the fine ladies' talk; and (in 1831) illustrations of the *Heart of Midlothian*, *Ivanhoe*, and *The Giaour*, with an original domestic subject, 'The Arrival of the new Governess.' The *Forget-me-not* for 1829 contains a very pretty plate by her, called 'Ellen Strathallan;' and another design of hers, 'The False One,' is engraved in the volume for 1831.

To the number of Associates elected during Cristall's presidency who belonged to the same class of painters of domestic events, must be added the name of JOHN WILLIAM WRIGHT, who came in just at the end. He must not be confounded with John Masey Wright. The resemblance in name and their association in the same group of figure designers were nearly all that they had in common. In point of age the former belonged to a younger generation. He was born

<sup>1</sup> *English Female Artists*, i. 380, 381.

about thirty years later than the latter, namely in 1802 or 1803. His father, John Wright, a miniature painter of repute,<sup>1</sup> exhibited at the Academy from 1795 till the time of his death in 1820 ; and, through the recommendations of Sir Thomas Lawrence, many of whose portraits he copied in little, and the friendly interest of William Owen, R.A., of whom he painted a large miniature, was in the enjoyment of the highest patronage. In early life he had worked with the graver, and when very young reproduced in the chalk manner a set of sketches of Morland's from nature. Some portraits by Northcote and Hoppner were also engraved by him, and led to his own practice with the pencil.<sup>2</sup> His wife also is said to have painted beautifully in miniature.

Young Wright had the misfortune to lose both parents before he attained his majority, though not before measures had been taken to improve the talent inherited from them. His mother died when he was very young ; and his father married again soon after that event. The boy was sent to a school at 'Loughborough House,' Brixton, when in his tenth year ; but being delicate was brought home, and there, amongst his father's pupils,<sup>3</sup> his own talent for art came to be recognized. Wright, junior, was thereupon placed with the portrait painter Thomas Phillips, R.A., and he remained under his instruction until his father died, it is said by his own hand.<sup>4</sup> He was then seventeen or eighteen. The severe shock occasioned by this event was aggravated by the loss of a fortune which he had expected to inherit. But with much determination he set to work for his own support, and devoted himself to water-colour painting. He obtained pupils ; and in 1825 began to exhibit portraits at the Royal Academy. Except a 'Juliet' in 1827, and a scene from the life of the Chevalier Bayard in 1829, all his exhibits were portraits, until he came to our gallery in 1831 with a scene from *Othello*, and a 'Girl reading.' He had been elected Associate on the 14th of February in that year.

Another new Associate brought seven drawings to the gallery, mostly studies of rustic figures, in this last year of Cristall's reign,

<sup>1</sup> He was the 'J. Wright of Burlington Gardens' referred to above in relation to the account of John Masey Wright. See p. 538, *n.* 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Somerset House Gazette*, i. 353, 354.

<sup>3</sup> One of them was S. P. Denning the miniature painter, afterwards curator of the Dulwich Gallery.

<sup>4</sup> Redgrave's *Dictionary of the English School*.

having been elected on the same day as J. W. Wright, the 14th of February, 1831. This was FREDERICK TAYLER, a name destined to become conspicuous in the Society's annals. He was for thirteen years its President, and remained a Member and Trustee thereof until his recent death, when he had survived all his first contemporaries. Reserving for a future occasion a notice of his works and his long career as a Member, a short note may here be made of the circumstances of his origin and previous life.

He was born in 1802<sup>1</sup> at Boreham Wood, near Elstree, Herts. There his father, Archdale Wilson Tayler, lived on his own estate the life of a country gentleman, fond of sport. He had a very large number of children, among whom it was our artist's misfortune to be one of the youngest; for ruin falling upon the family, through the misconduct of an agent, the father entered the army, and dying when Frederick was a little boy, left behind him a widow with seventeen children, of whom only the elder ones had been launched on the world. The eldest son, named like his father, Archdale Wilson, was for some years a chaplain in India, and afterwards became Rector of Stoke Newington. Thomas, another son, who seems to have been an eccentric sort of person, went to India as a cadet in 1823, served through the first Burmese War, and was finally rendered independent by a handsome legacy from his friend the Duke of Dorset. A younger brother, William, also went to India as a writer in 1829, where his name was much before the public as Commissioner of Patna at the time of the Mutiny in 1857. He shared with his brother Frederick some of the artistic talent in the family, but chiefly dealt in caricature. The eventful period of his life is related by him in a lively style in two thick octavo volumes (1881-2) interspersed with many comic illustrations, which recall the graphic humour of Thackeray. He also made a very large drawing of the triumphal reception by the Deputy Governor Sir Herbert Maddock at Calcutta of 250 guns taken in the first Sikh campaign, which was engraved by F. C. Lewis. Several of the sisters of Frederick Tayler were married; one to the Rev. William J. J. Drury of Harrow, who was chaplain to the late, and tutor to the present, King of the Belgians, and long known in Brussels as incumbent of the English Church there; another to his cousin Henry Drury, son

<sup>1</sup> The biographers concur in assigning the date 30 April, 1804, to his birth; but the advertisement of his death in the *Times* of 24 June, 1889, gives his age as eighty-seven, which would place the former event two years earlier; and this agrees with the register of his baptism.



of Dr. Joseph Drury, head master of Harrow School, and himself a master there in Lord Byron's time ; and a third, Matilda, to that poet's great friend the Rev. Francis Hodgson, Vicar of Bakewell in Derbyshire, and afterwards Provost of Eton. There is a characteristic letter in Moore's *Life of Byron*,<sup>1</sup> from Byron to Henry Drury, announcing his lordship's own engagement (to Miss Milbanke), and expressing a wish that Hodgson and he might be married at the same time, 'like people electrified in a row.' Hodgson once took young Tayler to see his friend at Trinity College, Cambridge, and the boy having made a sketch of Byron's favourite dog, received from its master the gift of a silver pencil-case.

Frederick Tayler received a classical education, going both to Eton and Harrow, as he was intended for the Church, a considerable amount of clerical interest being available in the family ; for his grandfather was Dean of Bocking in Essex, and his uncle Dean of Christchurch. Against the wishes of his family, however, he took up the profession of an artist, for which he had shown his *penchant* from the earliest age, and found himself dependent for his livelihood upon brush and pencil while still a youth. His regular training in art began at Sass's school, and was continued in that of the Royal Academy. Then he studied in Paris under Horace Vernet, and was much also in the atelier of his master's son-in-law, Paul Delaroche, a signed drawing by whom, in coloured crayons, of the young artist's head is still in the possession of the family. Afterwards he pursued his studies in Rome, and 'lived in Italy for some time.' We further read that 'in Calais about 1818 he met R. P. Bonington, who was then staying there with S. W. Reynolds,' and that 'Bonington and he became very close friends, and lived together in the French capital, where they shared a studio that had belonged to Vernet.'<sup>2</sup> It is highly probable that his taste for water-colour art was fostered by his distinguished companion, whose proficiency in that branch was unsurpassed. He is also said to have been much in Prout's company on the French coast. But Tayler's first exhibited work was an oil picture, 'The Band of the 2nd Regiment of Life Guards,' at the Royal Academy in 1830, the year before he joined our Society ; and he afterwards sent occasional works in that medium either to the Academy or to the British Institution.

It is, however, as a water-colour painter of sporting and pastoral

<sup>1</sup> Numbered 205.

<sup>2</sup> *Athenæum*, 29 June, 1889.

scenes, with horses, dogs, and other animals in present and past times, and by his pictures thereof at Pall Mall East for an unprecedented number of seasons, that he was known and celebrated.

A small class of exhibitors, whose contingent of drawings was needed to form a complete representation of water-colour art, has still to be dealt with. Then, as now, the department of fruit and flower painting and allied subjects of still life was chiefly cultivated by female artists.

It will be recollected that at the foundation of the original Society flower pieces were excluded, and that a relaxation of the rule had to be made for the admission of Miss Byrne. No such restriction appears now to have been recognized. Except during the oil invasion, MISS BYRNE had been in the Society from the second year of its existence. Once (in 1820) she exhibited a fruit and flower piece<sup>1</sup> at Spring Gardens; but the seven years from 1813 to 1819 formed the only interval between 1806 and 1833 when she did not send one or more drawings annually to the season's show. Fruit or flowers were her constant subjects, with now and then, chiefly in the later time, a bird or its nest. She had ten works at Suffolk Street. In 1834 her name disappears from our catalogue, and on the 9th of June in the same year her resignation was accepted with a resolution of regret. She died within three years, namely on the 2nd of January, 1837, in her sixty-second year. From 1808 she had been constant to the address, No. 55 Upper John Street, Fitzroy Square.

The remaining lady Members were imported after the reformation of 1820.

MRS. T. H. FIELDING, elected on the 12th of February, 1821, was the wife of Copley Fielding's eldest brother, Theodore Henry (Adolphus) Fielding. She was an artist's daughter also. Her maiden name was Mary Anne Walton, and she and her sister, Miss Walton, were both water-colour painters of the same class of subjects,<sup>2</sup> namely flowers, birds, and insects. She was little known as a previous exhibitor, having had only two drawings at Spring Gardens, besides something at the British Institution, all in 1820. From that year (inclusive) till 1834, the last in which she exhibited, she had thirty works in the gallery, having been an absentee in 1824 only. Her name

<sup>1</sup> Painted for Mrs. Sandford Graham.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Percy's MS. Catalogue.

remained in the catalogue for 1835, but she sent no drawing then, and resigned in the same year. For the last nine years she had resided at Croydon, her husband being teacher of drawing at Addiscombe Military College. No date is recorded either of her birth or death.

MISS M. SCOTT, another painter of flowers and fruit, was daughter of William Scott the Associate. She was elected on the 10th of February, 1823. She resided with her father until 1833. Then she married a Mr. Brookbank, but still remained at Brighton. She contributed nothing but fruit and flower studies to the gallery, sending one or more yearly from 1823 to 1833, in all twenty-one as 'Miss Scott,' but only three under her married name, intermittently, till 1837. After the following year the name 'Mrs. Brookbank' is also withdrawn. But the authoress of *English Female Artists* states that she 'continued to exhibit up to 1859.'<sup>1</sup> No further particulars of her history have been found procurable.

George Barret's sister MISS M. BARRET was elected a Member on the same 10th of February, 1823, and had thirty-four drawings in the gallery, one or more every season from that year until 1835. She died in 1836, in which year her name alone is in the catalogue. Birds are her chief subjects; but she also sent studies of fish, fruit, and other objects of still life; those of the first two years being entirely of the latter class.

She is said to have begun her artist life as a painter of miniatures, and to have been the same 'Miss M. Barret' whose name is attached to seven works of this kind from 1797 to 1800 in the catalogues of the Royal Academy, the last of which was a portrait group of 'the Duke of Northumberland and family.' Her address, as there given, was at Romney's; and Graves in his *Dictionary of Artists* sets her down as a pupil of that painter's. But Redgrave<sup>2</sup> and Miss Clayton<sup>3</sup> concur in stating that her instructress was Mrs. Mee (*née* Foldstone), a miniature painter much patronized by King George IV. when Prince of Wales. While a Member of our Society she resided with her brother George at Paddington.

In recounting the above events, it has been found expedient for the sake of continuity to trespass sometimes on the period of Fielding's presidency. The record of Cristall's must not be closed without the mention of a few detached incidents, registered on the

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 401.

<sup>2</sup> *Dict. of English School.*

<sup>3</sup> *English Female Artists*, i. 393.



Society's minutes, which took place while the latter was still, nominally at least, at the head of affairs. On many occasions the Society, in its corporate capacity, had given brotherly aid to its own Members and their families in distress. On the 9th of May, 1827, its charity was extended to the profession in general by a vote of ten guineas to the Artists' Benevolent Fund. On the 30th of November, 1827, a law was passed providing for the devolution to the representatives of a deceased Member of his share in the property of the Society in cash or the public funds. This, it was afterwards explained, did not apply to Ladies or Associates, who had neither claims on, nor responsibilities in relation to, the Society. After 1828 the Secretary's annual salary was increased to 45*l.* and the Treasurer's to 40*l.* On the 25th of June, 1831, they were again raised to 50*l.* each.

The question of providing an even better gallery being still in agitation from time to time, a plan of Mr. Salvin's for building the Society a new one on a twenty years' lease, in 'the new square at Charing Cross marked out on the plan of improvements for the site of the Athenæum,' was entertained in June 1827; but it was eventually abandoned in favour of a new lease of the gallery in Pall Mall East, which was taken for seven years from Christmas, 1829. On the 16th of July, 1831, a scheme was brought forward to convert the 'premises adjoining the gallery' into an additional exhibition room; but this proposal was deferred, and apparently fell through.

On the death of Sir Thomas Lawrence, in the height of his fame, on the 7th of January, 1830, after a few days' illness, a tribute of respect to his memory was paid by the Society. At its own request it was represented in the funeral procession on the 21st, from the Royal Academy (Somerset House) to St. Paul's Cathedral, by the following members: Barret, De Wint, Finch, Hills, Mackenzie, Nash, Prout, Pugin, Robson, Varley, Wild. The deceased had been a good friend to many water-colour artists.

In November 1830 a proposal was made by Mr. Martin for the publication of a series of engravings from representative drawings by the various Members of the Society; and the sanction of that body was accorded, subject to a condition that the average size of the prints should be 5 × 7 inches. The proposed work was announced by advertisement in the catalogue for 1831. It was to be issued in about twelve parts, to begin in May and be continued at intervals not exceeding two months, each part containing three plates. These

were to be engraved on copper, the use of which metal, notwithstanding the greatly superior effect producible upon it, had by that time been almost superseded by steel, on account of the much larger number of impressions to be obtained from the latter. This programme was only partially carried out. At the time of the next year's exhibition only two parts had appeared, and in September 1833 the work was brought to an end with the completion of a set of eighteen plates. An address of that date informs subscribers that the commercial success was not enough to justify carrying on the work further; the competition of small prints in *Annals* &c. being too great. The book now forms a folio volume of beautiful copper-plate engravings in line, some of the last of their kind, after drawings by the following artists: Cattermole, Cotman, Cox, Cristall, De Wint, Evans (of Eton), Fielding, Harding, Hills, Hunt, Lewis, Prout, Robson, Stephanoff, Wild, and J. M. Wright; engraved by about an equal number of the leading engravers, some of whom abstained on principle from practising on steel. The title of the work is, *Gallery of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, folio, Tilt, 1833. Its dedication to the King is dated 16 December, 1831.

There appears, by the following anecdote, which is recounted in Mr. Jenkins's notes, on the authority of the late James Holland, to have been another set of engravings made, at some unknown time, after drawings by Members of the Water-Colour Society. They are described as aquatint imitations, published by a not over-scrupulous dealer, named Roberts, who enjoyed the sobriquet of 'Spectacles.' The story runs that he 'applied to Copley Fielding for one of his drawings to engrave for the work. Fielding refused to let him have one for that purpose. Whereupon Roberts, indignant, replied, "You may refuse to paint me a drawing, but you can't prevent me having one already painted; and this I will do, and have engraved the very worst I can procure." Roberts,' added the narrator, 'kept his word by doing so.'

We have seen that the Society, warned perhaps by past experience at Spring Gardens, had been mindful of the advantage of keeping itself select, and desirous of securing quality rather than quantity in the choice of its exhibitors; insomuch that the class of Associates had never been even raised to its full complement of numerical strength. This was not for want of candidates. In February 1831 no fewer than seventeen presented themselves, out of

whom two were elected. In the previous year there had been none elected, out of eight who aspired to that honour. With this competition for membership, and seeing the Society's popularity and prosperous condition, it is not surprising that a rival should once more have entered the field; nor is it less to be wondered at that a faction should have arisen, among artists outside the privileged circle, whose rivalry was by no means of a friendly character. On the principle *audiendi alteram partem*, it may be fair to quote, for what it is worth, the following tirade which appeared in a malcontent journal, as part of a critique on the Water-Colour Society's exhibition of 1831. After sneering a little in a general way at the indiscriminating passion which existed for water-colours, compelling even oil painters 'to come into the manufactory' where 'any sketchy thing with a bit of colour and effect, bearing a little the air of Bonnington, but none of his grace,' was good enough for the demand, the writer proceeds to lay the blame on our Society in the following virulent strain: 'The monopoly of this Institution, by the paltry, mercenary workings of its members, has contributed mainly to this corruption and degradation. It is a farce, a notorious farce and falsehood, to suppose that Academies and Institutions, professedly "for the promotion of the best interests of the Fine Arts," are anything, in fact, but monopolies for the promotion of the selfish interests of the few that constitute them. This Institution, for instance, is exclusive in the narrowest degree, as if measured by the minds of the Directors, and proceeds entirely on the profitable principle of "the fewer the better cheer." No one out of the pale of the Society, however much his works may eclipse their own (and, perhaps, for that prudent reason alone) is permitted to exhibit here, and the consequence is that many draftsmen of the finest talent, but disdainful of the mere slip-slop character of water-colour painters, are refused the entrée; while those within, lining the walls, as it has been known, with fifty pieces by a single artist, spoil the Exhibition by a dull, tedious monotony; and if they can be said to reign in this confined region, it is because they are one-eyed monarchs of the blind. We say not this in disparagement of the genius of several of them, but in reprobation of the contemptible system which excludes the delightful variety which might be produced by admitting a few of the sparkling productions of the more powerful masters. This illiberal policy, the offspring of sordid ignorance, has over-reached itself, and



set afoot another Gallery, on a more enlightened and encouraging principle, which may easily, and we hope will soon, as *Launcelot Gobbo* says, "raise the *waters*" to a fairer level.'<sup>1</sup>

The gallery here referred to, the promoters whereof were not all, it is to be hoped, animated by the spirit of hostility here displayed, was opened in the following year, 1832, under the name of the *New Society of Painters in Water-Colours*, as a free exhibition, at 16 Old Bond Street, where the old Society had been located in 1808, and the 'Associated Artists' from 1810 to 1812. This Society was the germ of what is now the ROYAL INSTITUTE OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS. But it had to go through various trials and transformations before it arrived at its present state of development. These, however, are matters which do not belong to the present stage of our subject. The drama passes now into its fourth act, in the Presidency of Copley Fielding. The following schedule, in a similar form to that given on pages 417-420 *supra*, brings the account up to the date of his accession to the chair.

EXHIBITORS AT THE 'SOCIETY OF PAINTERS IN WATER-COLOURS'  
DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF CRISTALL (1821-1831).

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF										
	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831
ALLFORT, H. C. . . . .	M		A								
AUSTIN, S. . . . .											
BARRET, G. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Barret, <i>Miss</i> . . . . .		<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
Bennet, W. J. . . . .	A	A	A	A	A						
Byrne, <i>Miss</i> . . . . .	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
Byrne, J. . . . .							M	M	M	M	M
CATERMOLE, G. . . . .		A							A	A	A
Chisholm, A. . . . .									A	A	A
Cotman, J. S. . . . .					A	A		A	A	A	A
COX, D. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
CRISTALL, J. . . . .	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
DE WINT, P. . . . .					M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Essex, R. H. . . . .			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
EVANS, W. (of Eton) . . . .								A	A	A	M

<sup>1</sup> The above is from a newspaper cutting pasted in a copy of the catalogue of the Society of Painters in Water-Colours for 1831, in the South Kensington Museum Library. In the same critique Barret, De Wint, Hunt, and Cox are praised. But Robson is severely handled on the score of false colour, the prodigious number of his exhibits, and his picture-dealing ways. Hills's painting is condemned (not at this date without some justice) as worsted-work. Havell is called a silly follower of 'Turner with his mustard-pot.' And an elegant criticism, which recalls the time of Anthony Pasquin and Peter Pindar, is made on No. 60, in these words, '*Asses, HILLS and ROBSON—This is a puzzler. We examined their faces well, but we give it up. We cannot tell which is which.*'

EXHIBITORS, &C.—*continued.*

	IN CATALOGUE OF EXHIBITION OF										
	1821	1822	1823	1824	1825	1826	1827	1828	1829	1830	1831
FIELDING, A. V. C. . . . .	S	S	S	S	S	S	M	M	M	M	M
<i>Fielding, T.</i> . . . . .									A	A	A
Fielding, <i>Mrs.</i> T. H. . . . .	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
FINCH, F. O. . . . .		A	A	A	A	A	A	M	M	M	M
GASTINEAU, H. . . . .		A	A	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
HARDING, J. D. . . . .		A	M	M	M	M			M	M	M
HAVELL, W. . . . .							M	M			
HILLS, R. . . . .			M	M	M	M	T	T	T	T	T
HUNT, W. HENRY . . . . .				A	A	A	M	M	M	M	M
<i>Jackson, S.</i> . . . . .			A	A	A	A		A	A	A	A
LEWIS, J. F. . . . .							A	A	A	M	M
MACKENZIE, F. . . . .							M	M	M	M	M
<i>Moore, C.</i> . . . . .		A	A	A	A	A	A	A			
NASH, F. . . . .				M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
NESFIELD, W. . . . .			A	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
PROUT, S. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
PUGIN, A. . . . .	M	M	M		M	M	M	M	M	M	M
<i>Pyne, G.</i> . . . . .							A	A	A	A	A
RICHTER, H. . . . .			A		A	M	M	A	M		M
ROBSON, G. F. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
<i>Scott, Miss</i> . . . . .			<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
<i>Scott, W.</i> . . . . .	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
Sharpe, Eliza . . . . .									<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
Sharpe, Louisa . . . . .									<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>M</i>
SMITH, J. . . . .	T	T	M								
STEPHANOFF, J. . . . .	M		M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
STEVENS, F. . . . .			M								
TAYLER, F. . . . .											A
TURNER, W. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
VARLEY, J. . . . .	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
<i>Walker, W.</i> . . . . .	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
<i>Whicelo, J.</i> . . . . .			A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
WILD, C. . . . .	M	M	T	T	T	T	S	S	S	S	S
<i>Williams, P.</i> . . . . .							A	A	A	A	A
WRIGHT, J. M. . . . .				A	M	M	M		M	M	M
WRIGHT, J. W. . . . .											A

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME













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